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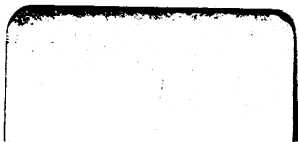
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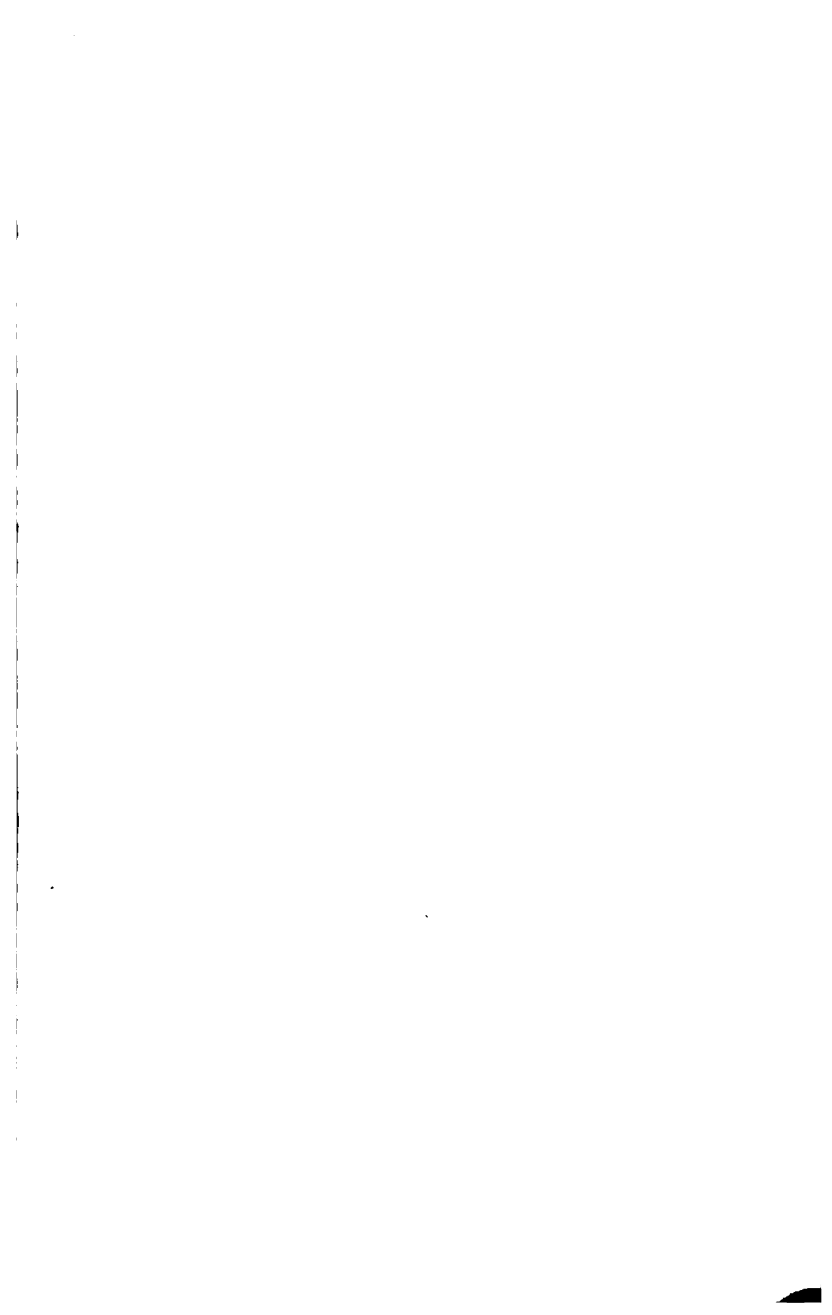
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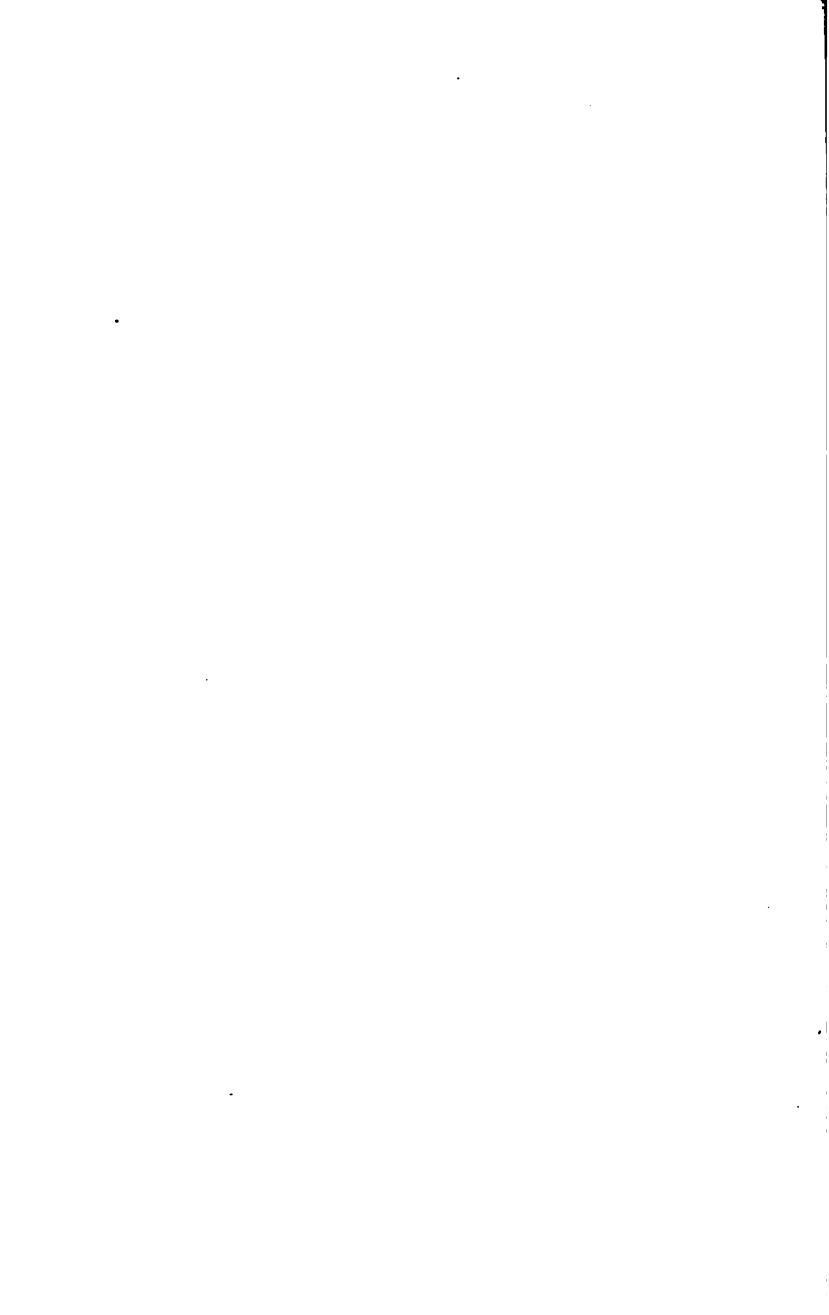
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THE CHURCH
UNDER THE TUDORS,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER ON THE
ORIGIN OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN
CHURCH AND STATE

BY

DURHAM DUNLOP/M.R.I.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BATH," ETC.

'*Crudelis ubique
Luctus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis Imago.*'—VIRGIL.

Write, and tell out this bloody tale.—LONGFELLOW

SECOND EDITION

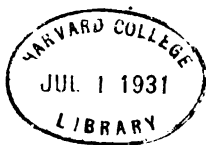
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TO THE READER.

THE purpose of this work is to present a popular sketch of the Ecclesiastical History of England, from the accession of Henry VIII, A.D. 1509, to the death of Elizabeth, A.D. 1603; with a view to illustrate some of the principal evils that were caused by the unfortunate establishment of the Church of the Reformation under the absolute supremacy of the Crown.

It was the Tudors who thus fashioned and established the *Ecclesiastical System* of England, and thereby prepared the material for the revolutionary convulsion under the second Stuart, which, by a necessary reaction, overwhelmed both the Throne and the Church in one common, and not undeserved, catastrophe.

It was intended, at first, to include "the Church under the Stuarts" in the present historical sketch, but the subject was found too extensive for the limits of a popular volume.

For the same reason all reference to the history of the Reformed Church in Ireland has been omitted. It is sufficient to state, however, that the Ecclesiastical Policy of the Tudors in Ireland was even worse, were that possible, than what was so mercilessly carried out in England.

It was not that in both countries the State Church enjoyed an invidious ascendancy over all other religious Denominations, but because that ascendancy, unjust and most offensive in itself,

was rendered more intolerable by the political and civil enslavement that it involved, not of the Roman Catholics alone, but of the whole body of Protestant Dissenters.

By the 13th and 25th Chas. II., known as the Test and Corporation Acts, it was enacted that all persons before they were admitted into situations in Corporations, or received any Civil or Military office, or any place of trust under the Crown, should receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the rites of the State Church.

The inevitable effect of such legislation was to exclude conscientious Protestant Nonconformists from holding any office of trust or emolument under the Crown. It denied them Civil and Political rights—the rights of free subjects, just as effectively as the Penal Laws operated against Roman Catholics.

The Corporation Act never extended to Ireland, and the Test Act, which did, was abolished in 1780 ; but it is a remarkable fact that both Acts remained in force in England until 1828, when they were repealed, while the Roman Catholic Relief Act was passed in 1829.

Thus, although the Civil and Political degradation of both Protestant and Roman Catholic Nonconformists was considered essential to the protection of the existence and interests of the State Church for so long a period, it was in Ireland that the baneful influences of its ascendancy were most severely felt, and produced the most lamentable results.

Unfortunately, the Church in Ireland partook far more of the character of a Political than of a Religious institution, and thus its mere existence was felt by the vast majority of the population as an outrage on national right, an insult to the national feeling, and a galling offence against Christian parity.

Preface.

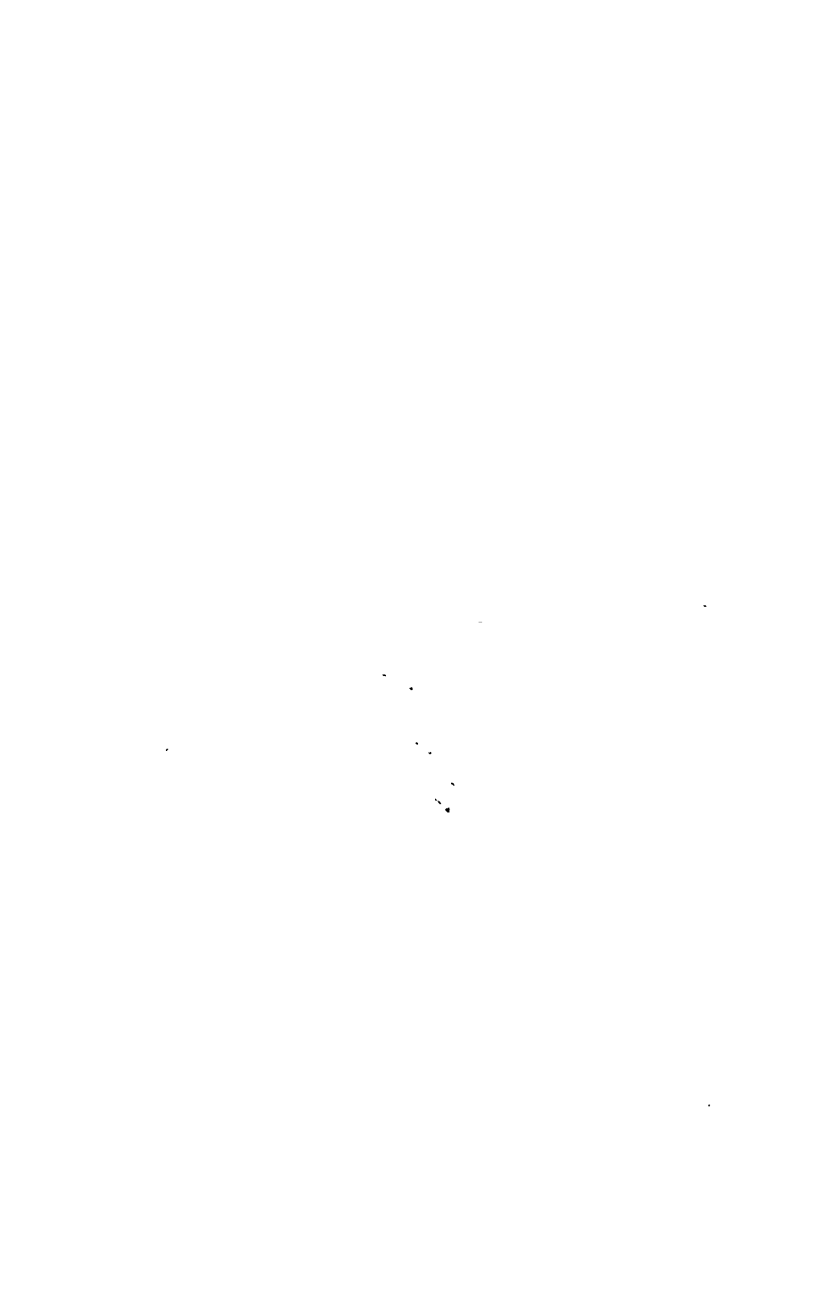
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Hence its utter failure as a Missionary Church, because it sought to violate the sanctity of conscience, and made the enjoyment of civil and political rights dependant on religious profession. Thus all the traditions of the State Church were revolting to the national sentiment—they were oppressive and sanguinary.

But justice, though tardily, at last triumphed. The Church of the Tudors, whose baneful existence must be regarded as a potent cause of the principal calamities that afflicted Ireland during some three hundred years of deplorable history, at length happily experienced the retributive fate of *Disestablishment* and *Disendowment*. And that a similar fate will ere long overtake the State Churches of England and Scotland no one can doubt who notes the current of public opinion.

HOLFORD LODGE, ALPHA ROAD,
REGENT'S PARK, LONDON.

June, 1881.



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CHURCH AND STATE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

On the Origin of the Connection between Church and State.

IN patriarchal ages parental authority reigned supreme. The father combined in his own person the functions of both King and Priest : he ruled the family with an unlimited prerogative, and officiated in the performance of whatever religious customs were observed.

As families multiplied, and, for purposes of self-defence, became associated together in tribes, the necessity for chiefs and rulers arose. The usurpations of conquest then followed ; nations were gradually formed ; and, as the kingly power was developed, the regal and the sacerdotal offices continued to be united in the one person.

The first kings could not fail to be aware of the marvellous influence exercised by what is called religion on the minds of men, and it was natural that in their rude primal efforts to organize communities and governments, they should follow the patriarchal model, by retaining the priestly office in their own hands, and seeking to fortify their position by its powerful influences.

The sword might be potent enough to conquer, but something more was necessary to govern successfully. The King was strong ; but the King and the Priest combined became infinitely stronger, because the superstitious feelings to which the priestly office more particularly appeals constitute the greatest motive power by which untutored multitudes can be swayed. Hence among all the ancient nations of which we have authentic record, we find that in the early stages of their establishment, whoever ruled over them in temporal matters always ministered in things they held sacred.

This was the case among the Greeks. In times of peace their kings were principally employed at home as the managers and arbiters of all things appertaining to religion. All sacrifices for the safety of the State were offered by them, and there were also certain peculiar Priestly offices which they exercised in person. Homer describes Agamemnon as officiating personally in the public sacrifices after he had been placed in command of the Grecian army ; and other kings and heroes are represented as performing priestly functions under him.

Among the Lacedæmonians, the King always performed the sacrifice before engaging in battle ; and Aristotle says that in the age of the heroes it was the custom for the same person to command the army, to officiate as judge, and also as high-priest. "We have no reason to think," observes Stackhouse, "that until some ages after Homer, mankind had any other public ministers in religion, but those who were Kings and Governors of the State."¹

In time, however, as the organization of States became more elaborated, and the duties of government increased, Kings delegated the Priestly office to a separate order of men ; and as the two powers—the kingly and the priestly—are mainly concerned in the government of mankind, an identity of interests naturally bound them together, and in this way the

¹ Hist. Bible, b. iii. c. i.

connection between Church and State originated as a national institution among all settled governments.

The first institution of a distinct order of Priests, with laws for their regulation, of which we have account, was among the Israelites under Moses. No sooner, however, did Priests become a distinct order in any State than they waxed ambitious—secured to themselves exclusive privileges, which were necessarily injurious to the public weal, and laboured, but too successfully, in the accumulation of vast power and wealth.

In Egypt, the Priests, when they became a separate order, held the next rank to Kings, and secured the privilege that from among themselves should be chosen the great officers of State.² With respect to Rome, its first Kings were also Priests, and had the chief direction in all sacred things; but Numa, the second King, instituted, B.C. 715, the *Pontifices*, or ministers of sacred things, the chief of whom, called *Pontifex Maximus*, held office for life, and was supreme judge and arbiter in all sacred matters. Cæsar Augustus assumed, B.C. 31, the office of *Pontifex M.* to increase his authority as Emperor—an example followed by his successors to the reign of Gratian, A.D. 367, after which the title was dropped.

When the Emperor Constantine made profession of Christianity, the authority he possessed as *Pontifex M.* under the

² This monopoly of high civil offices was not peculiar to Pagan priestcraft. It prevailed under Christian governments in all the States of Europe up to the period of the Reformation. In Protestant nations the *lay element* then asserted its rights, but in Roman Catholic countries the sacerdotal order unhappily continued to rule supreme, until the European atmosphere was somewhat purified by the terrible whirlwind of the first French Revolution. Until the absorption of the Papal States by the Italian monarchy, this *ignoring of the lay element* still continued, hence Papal administration was proverbially the very worst in Europe. In ancient Paganism there was nothing to excel it in depravity. Indeed a government by priests—Pagan or Christian—has always proved the most barbarous, corrupt, cruel, and profligate with which humanity was ever cursed.

Pagan system he still retained and exercised in the government of the Christian Church. He assumed, as a right, the supreme power in the Church, to remodel its administration, control its discipline, and order its government as he might consider most conducive to his own interests or the public good. "This right he enjoyed," says Mosheim, "without any opposition, as none of the Bishops presumed to call his authority in question."³

"It was long since established as a fundamental maxim of the Roman constitution," observes Gibbon,⁴ "that every rank of citizens were alike subject to the laws, and that *the care of religion was the right as well as the duty of the civil magistrate*. Constantine and his successors could not easily persuade themselves that they had forfeited, by their conversion, any branch of the imperial prerogatives, or that they were incapable of giving laws to a religion which they had protected and embraced."

It was thus that the civil magistrate obtained rule over the Christian Church, and claimed authority to coerce Christian consciences into submission to his arbitrary will. The connection between the Christian Church and the State was thus founded on precedents drawn from Pagan antiquity, and the fruits of that connection have been in every age and country a disgrace to the Christian name and profession.

The weight of evidence favours the opinion that when Constantine professed Christianity he did so simply as a highly politic expedient, which was admirably calculated to serve his ambitious designs. His subsequent conduct favours this conclusion. He mingled Pagan practice and Christian profession during the remainder of his days; and it was only, as Eusebius relates, when on his death-bed that he was admitted into the communion of the faithful.⁵

³ Eccles. Hist., cent. iv. p. ii. c. ii. § i.

⁴ Decline and Fall, c. 20.

⁵ Vit. Const., l. 4, c. 61.

But in one respect Constantine appears to have been singularly wise and enlightened, in contrast with the Christian clergy, who had obtained not only protection from him, but also establishment and endowment. *He was for universal toleration ; they, like all favoured priests, desired to monopolize liberty, and kindle the flames of persecution !* He had witnessed with indignation the barbarous cruelties inflicted by Roman soldiers under Diocletian on those Christian citizens whose religion was their only crime. He had observed also in the East and the West the different effects produced by severity and indulgence ; and, on succeeding his father in the command of the army in Britain, he immediately suspended or repealed the cruel edicts of persecution which then existed, and granted the free exercise of their religion to all those who professed themselves members of the Christian Church.⁶

This wise, humane, and enlightened conduct, whatever may have been Constantine's motives, merits the highest commendation, more especially as it was followed by the promulgation of the celebrated Edict of Milan, A.D. 313, which restored peace to the Christian Church, and was designed to be "the great charter of toleration confirming to each individual of the Roman world the privilege of choosing and professing his own religion. But this was not what Christian priests wanted. No sooner had they obtained toleration than they hungered and thirsted after the power to persecute !

The enlightened moderation of Constantine was not calculated to please the degenerate fanatical clergy of the Christian

⁶ During the whole course of his reign, Constantine maintained a judicious attitude between the contending faiths. "His ministers," says Gibbon, "were permitted to signify the intention of their master in the various language which was best adapted to their respective principles ; and he artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects, by publishing in the same year two edicts ; the first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday, and the second directed the regular consultation of aruspices !"—*Decline and Fall*, c. 20.

Church, who thought only of prostituting the imperial favour they enjoyed to bloody purposes of retaliation and vengeance. Basking in the sunshine of court favour, they were not content to enjoy quietly the consideration and wealth imperial patronage bestowed upon them, but desired to signalize their ascendancy by the persecution of Paganism, and also by interdicting all freedom of judgment and independence of opinion even among themselves !

The continued toleration of Pagan worship as the religion of the Senate and people of Rome, was a grievous offence in the eyes of Christian priests, who desired to see established the depravity and ferocity of Pagan intolerance, from which they had so recently escaped. They vehemently declared that it was the imperative duty of a Christian sovereign—such as Constantine affected to be by profession—to draw the sword and extirpate all idolatrous observances. Nay more, freely acknowledging and applauding the assumption of ecclesiastical supremacy by Constantine, as his rightful prerogative, *they desired its exercise to extirpate what they held to be heretical opinions among professing Christians !* They loudly demanded that he should settle theological disputes with the sword ! He, however, wisely resisted their unseemly importunities, and never could be prevailed on to prohibit Pagan worship ; but fully sensible of the advantages to be derived from using the Christian Church as an engine of State policy, he was easily induced to exercise his assumed supremacy in taking cognizance of its internal divisions of opinion.

Even at this comparatively early period, grievous and manifold corruptions obscured the purity and perverted the simplicity of primitive faith and worship. A debased Platonic philosophy, with an admixture of Jewish cabala, ancient mythology, and Oriental conceits, made Christian doctrine partake largely of mystical speculation, by which a crude, unintelligible metaphysical logomachy was substituted for the

plain, practical teaching of Christ and his Apostles. At the same time, Christian worship was extravagantly conducted in ridiculous imitation of Pagan ceremonials. The Church, too, swarmed with "ignorant and illiterate Bishops and Presbyters, the greater part of whom," says Mosheim, "were entirely destitute of all learning and education."

It is easy to understand how such a clergy would more readily fall in with the cruel practices of Pagan intolerance and persecution, than appreciate and inculcate the sublime moderation and forbearance of the Christian system. With minds warped by the illiberal prejudices of sects, and ignorantly cherishing the silliest superstitions, they were as unfitted to comprehend Christian philosophy as they were incapable of enlightened reasoning; comparatively helpless, therefore, in the presence of astute adversaries, they all the more eagerly besought the aid of the civil magistrate to decide perplexing controversies in their favour.

Eusebius testifies that the early Christians "were no sooner delivered from the hands of their enemies than they began to fall foul of one another." Differences of opinion sprung up even in Apostolic times; but as the boundaries of the Church extended, so did such differences increase and multiply, for Christian doctrine became corrupted by association with the idolatrous systems it was designed to supersede. Prior to the assembling of the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, there had been more than thirty Synods and Provincial Councils held in various places for the determination of doubtful and controverted points, many of which, says Bishop Warburton, related to "certain metaphysical questions, which, if considered in one light, are too sublime to become the subject of human wit; if in another, too trifling to gain the attention of reasonable men."

The rage of such controversy waxed fiercer in proportion to the triviality and unintelligibility of the points controverted,

and the fanatical enthusiasm of the disputants, while every difference of opinion eventuated in denunciatory accusations of heresy. But until the interposition of Constantine there was no supreme authority in the Church to determine controversies. Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, and Rome, were respectively the centres of confederated churches, and each exercised equal authority and maintained perfectly independent action within their own districts. When, however, a strict uniformity in doctrine and worship came to be regarded as an essential feature of the Christian Church, it unfortunately happened that no other means were thought of by which such uniformity could be maintained save by an appeal to the civil magistrate. There was then no representation of the universal Church, and it was never supposed that perfect freedom of church organization and of government, such as then prevailed, would be quite sufficient to maintain all necessary uniformity of faith and worship among Christians. Hence, as controversies arose, the spirit of theological rancour was evoked, and a desire to triumph over opponents influenced the bigotry and fanaticism of clerical disputants, so that, provided they could obtain power to humble their adversaries, they cared little whence that power came, or what evils might result from its employment.

Thus, scarcely had Constantine established Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire than bishops and churches clamorously appealed to him, and he was earnestly besought to interpose his authority—not to regulate the externals of the Church, but to settle abstruse theological controversies and punish heresies! With this view he was induced to summon the first General Council of the Church at Nice, the capital of Bythnia, Asia Minor; and in obedience to the imperial summons about 318 bishops assembled, who were not, says Eusebius, “more widely separated and diversified in sentiments than in person, residence, and race.”

The decrees of this Council had no validity until they were submitted to Constantine, and ratified by him, whereupon they became binding on the Church, in so far as he chose to enforce them. And at first he did enforce them in a very cruel manner. "Constantine thought the work of ecclesiastical legislation incomplete," says Waddington, "until the spiritual edict was enforced by temporal penalties. Immediate exile was inflicted on those who persisted in error—and the punishment of a heretic by a Christian prince was defended by the same plea of rebellious contumacy, which is urged by the apologists of his Pagan predecessors to justify the execution of a Christian."⁷ Heretical books were ordered to be delivered up that they might be consigned to the flames, and any one who concealed a copy of a prohibited work was to suffer death !

Thus, simultaneously with the establishment of the connection between Church and State under the Christian dispensation, the flames of persecution were kindled. From the manner in which some Protestants refer to religious persecution, it might be supposed there was no such thing known in the Christian world until the Bishops of Rome grew ambitious, assumed the exclusive title of "Pope," and aspired to universal dominion. But so far from this being true, or anything like the truth, a spirit of fanatical intolerance was a corrupting vice of the Church from its first organization under Bishops and Metropolitans, and no sooner was an alliance with the State established, than the natural fruit of the unholy union was manifested by persecuting unto death those who presumed to exercise liberty of inquiry and of conscience. The Popes only copied from Christian sovereigns, and strove to usurp a monopoly of the power to persecute. But for seven centuries before they were in a position to contest with sovereigns the ecclesiastical supremacy of

⁷ History of the Church, p. 93.

Christendom, Christian princes punished so-called heresies with banishment or imprisonment, the confiscation of property, and death. Yes, for seven hundred years before the Popes commenced to persecute actively, and acquire supreme power, dissent from a State creed was a capital offence in the barbarous criminal code of Christian Europe, and even after the boasted Reformation, with its wonderful sun-burst of Protestant intelligence, that cruel code remained unmitigated in the Reformed States generally, and to the deep disgrace of professing Protestantism, it was ruthlessly carried into execution.

The evil commenced with Constantine, and on his death the high prerogative of ecclesiastical supremacy was transmitted to his sons, Constantius and Constans, who inherited his empire. At a later period, when the division of the Roman empire into the Eastern and Western was effected, the sovereigns who succeeded thereto followed the example of Constantine, and maintained those ecclesiastical prerogatives as amply as he had done. Whatever opinions they, in the plenitude of their theological infallibility, considered orthodox, received countenance and support, while what they deemed heretical were persecuted. But it is remarkable that all the early Christian emperors, while they had no disinclination to enforce a uniformity of faith among Christians, by the persecution of Dissenters, yet they never could be induced to act with similar severity towards the profession and practices of Paganism. Hence, it was not until the year 392 that Theodosius I. abolished Pagan worship in Rome, and he was a cruel persecutor of non-conforming Christians. Scourging, banishment, and death, were the punishments awarded to such as persisted in holding what this barbarian anathematized as heretical opinions !

As the nations of Europe gradually embraced Christianity, the unhappy example of Constantine was also followed, and

their rulers assumed ecclesiastical supremacy as an essential prerogative of the kingly office. The Church thus became identified with the State, and a policy of persecution was necessarily inaugurated and followed by all the Christian sovereigns of Europe—a policy that commanded the eulogiums of bishops and councils when its operation tallied with their own opinions and interests—a policy that made free thought a crime, and incorporated with the jurisprudence of Christian Europe the intolerant maxims of the most depraved Pagan systems.

Clovis I., the founder of the French monarchy, on his profession of Christianity, assumed the chief direction of ecclesiastical affairs, and of his own authority assembled the Council of Orleans, A.D. 511, and ratified its decisions. Charlemagne extended this prerogative; for he became Emperor of the West, which made him sovereign of Rome. He was crowned by Pope Leo III., who rendered homage by kneeling before him. Charlemagne regulated by his supreme power the whole ecclesiastical affairs of his extensive dominions. He assembled a Council at Frankfort, A.D. 794, presided over its deliberations, confirmed its decrees, and ordered their promulgation. This great but cruel barbarian was famous for the persecuting edicts he issued, as well as for the atrocious acts of butchery he committed. He murdered in cold blood four thousand Saxons in one day; and the moral license he allowed himself may be judged by the fact that he divorced no less than nine wives! Yet his zeal for religion was so enlightened and humane, that he pronounced the pain of death against the heathen who refused to be baptized, while the same fate was awarded those who violated the sanctity of Lent by eating flesh-meat!

The alliance between Church and State, which thus became established in every nation of Christendom, was pregnant from the very first with evils of enormous magnitude. It led

to the introduction and sanctification of the most wicked principles of persecution into the jurisprudence of Christian Europe, causing the slaughter of millions of human beings on account of matters of conscientious belief over which, as the results of a purely mental process, mere human volition has no control whatever, no more than over the ordering, at will, the growth and development of physical organization. That principles so detestable and barbarous—so utterly repugnant to Christian precept, and scarcely consistent with the rudest heathenism—should have thus early obtained a fatal sanctuary in the bosom of the Christian Church, was a deplorable calamity, from which more human misery has resulted than from any other specific cause that gave unbridled license to the evil passions of mankind.

Hence arose the diabolical teaching by which it was sought to justify the most terrible persecution in after times—namely, *that whatever a State Church decrees to be heresy, it becomes the imperative duty of the Sovereign ruler to punish and extirpate as a crime of the first magnitude against God, and that this duty he cannot neglect or evade without thereby assuming to himself the whole guilt of the heresy, and incurring all the responsibility of whatever evil consequences may flow therefrom.* This became the favourite doctrine of all the State Churches in the world—of all who preached crusades of extirpation against those who dissented from State-manufactured creeds, and refused to conform thereto.

When the Archbishop of Mayence girt the Emperor Otho I. with the sword at his coronation, A.D. 936, he used these words, which betoken clearly enough the nature of the alliance between Church and State—"Receive this sword, and make use of it to suppress all bad Christians, and the enemies of Jesus Christ: use the power and authority of the Empire, which God has given you, to assure the peace of the Church." In sacerdotal language, "bad Christians" are not those who

commit moral crimes, but such as assert liberty of thought and judgment, and dare follow the dictates of conscience—these are the “bad Christians” who are to be anathematized as “the enemies of Jesus Christ,” and persecuted with fire and sword “to assure the peace of the Church!”

Under the usurpations of the Popes, however, persecution was carried out more systematically and fully than when sovereigns suppressed heresies at their own discretion. The Popes, by usurping and concentrating authority, gave unity, vigour, and direction to the persecuting spirit; while they sought to make monarchs and their subjects alike amenable to their universal and intolerable despotism. According to the refinements of Papal policy, the shedding of blood was abhorrent to the Church, hence heresy was only judged by the Church, and it became the highest duty of the secular authority to vindicate the insulted majesty of heaven by punishing those whom the Church adjudged obdurate heretics. It was the exclusive right of the Church to determine what was heresy, and it was the exclusive duty of the State to punish by enforcing the decrees of the Church.

Pope Alexander III. was the first who gave form and consistency to this system, in the third Council of Lateran, A.D. 1179. His object was to incite a crusade of extirpation against the Albigenses, who would not conform to the doctrine and worship of Rome; and with this view he got the twenty-seventh Canon of that Council passed. The preamble sets forth—“that although Church discipline, being satisfied with the judgment of the priest, doth not inflict bloody vengeance, yet is it assisted by the edicts of Christian princes, so that men often seek remedy unto salvation while they dread that corporal punishment will befall them.” That is, as heresy is often abjured under the dread of bodily torment, or when suffering from its infliction, it is the duty of Christian princes to act as the executioners of the persecuting judgments of the Church.

This point settled, the Canon then proceeds to anathematize the Albigenses, under the sectarian names of "Puritans, Patrins, or Publicans ;" and also to direct the thunders of the Church against "all who shall presume to receive or shelter them in their houses or lands." War was to be waged against them, and "all faithful Christians who shall take arms for the purpose of subduing them, according to the counsel of their bishops or other prelates, shall have two years' penance taken off ;" and it was further left in the discretion of their bishops to grant the faithful in arms "more ample indulgence in proportion to the extent of their labours."

In the fourth Lateran Council, A.D. 1215, this policy of persecution received additional development under the inspiration of the imperious and sanguinary Innocent III. The third Canon of that Council decrees—"Let the heretics, after their condemnation, be given up to the secular powers or their officers, to be punished according to their demerits, the clerks being first degraded : Let their goods be confiscated, if they be laïcs, and if clerks, applied to the use of the Church : Let those likewise, who lie under vehement suspicion of heresy, be anathematized, unless they give proof of their innocence ; and if they remain for a year under the sentence of anathema, let them be condemned as heretics.

"Let the temporal lords be admonished, and, if necessary, be compelled by the censures of the Church, that as they desire to be accounted faithful, they take an oath to exterminate all heretics or excommunicated persons who may be within their territories. And let every person whatsoever be bound by oath to observe this chapter before he be admitted to any authority, spiritual or temporal. But if the temporal lord, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to purge his land of this heretical filthiness, let him be excommunicated by the metropolitan and the other bishops of the province. And if he prove contumacious, let notice be given,

at the end of the year, to the Sovereign Pontiff, in order that he may pronounce the vassals absolved from their allegiance, and give up the land to be occupied by Catholics, who, when they shall have exterminated the heretics, are to possess it without opposition ; saving, however, the right of the lord paramount, provided he offer no hindrance or impediment. And let the Catholics who, taking upon them the badge of the cross, shall gird themselves to the extermination of heretics, enjoy the same indulgences and sacred privileges which are granted to those who go to the Holy Land."

In consistency with those Canons Pope Boniface VIII., who assumed the tiara A.D. 1294, issued an edict "to promote the honour of God and of his holy Church, and further the extermination of heretics." With this view, the edict runs,—
"We do require and admonish all secular powers, temporal lords, governors of provinces, cities, and other places, by whatsoever dignities, names, or offices they be entitled, that as they wish to be accounted faithful, they will, in defence of the faith, obey the bishops and other inquisitors of heretical pravity, deputed or to be deputed by the Apostolic See, and exert themselves in the discovery, capture, and diligent custody, of heretics, and their followers, favourers, harbourers, and defenders, and that without delay they will deliver, or cause to be delivered, those pestilent persons into the custody or prison of the bishops.

"Furthermore, we strictly command the above-mentioned potentates, temporal lords, governors, and their officers, that inasmuch as this crime of heresy is purely ecclesiastical, they take no cognizance or judgment concerning it in any manner whatsoever. And if any of the said potentates, temporal lords, &c., should do aught to the contrary, let him know that he is struck with the edge of an excommunication."

It must be observed, however, that although the power claimed by the Popes was unlimited, still their anathemas and

excommunications were entirely impotent, unless some powerful monarch was induced to enforce them. Occasionally monarchs were found to do so because it suited their own policy; but there is not an instance in history of any potentate who made himself the executioner of Papal decrees who had not some direct personal purpose to serve, or who was restrained from opposing Papal authority by any superstitious reverence for its assumed sanctity whenever the prospect of temporal advantages prompted resistance.

Thus, while frequently submitting to the extravagant pretensions of the Popes, Catholic monarchs never divested themselves of the ecclesiastical supremacy they claimed to exercise as their exclusive prerogative within their own dominions. They were governed entirely in their relations with the See of Rome by what they deemed the interests of their own States. Hence political and not religious considerations mainly influenced them in, at one time, sanctioning the monstrous assumptions of the Papacy, and on other occasions, in opposing those assumptions even by force of arms.

Thus, more than a century after Boniface had issued the imperious edict we have quoted, which degraded the Christian monarchs of Europe to the menial capacity of Papal constables and executioners of Papal sentences, the Emperor Sigismund, with the concurrence of the principal Powers of Europe, assembled the General Council of Constance, A.D. 1414—the greatest ecclesiastical assembly that was ever brought together. It deposed three Popes, and elected Martin V. to the Pontifical throne.

We have thus seen that the connection between Church and State originated in Pagan superstition and the craft of Priests and Kings,—that the first establishment of such a connection, under the Christian Dispensation, was effected by the Pagan Emperor Constantine, on his profession of Christianity in the early part of the fourth century,—that the precedent thus

established was followed by the rulers of other nations throughout Europe as they adopted Christianity, the assumption of supremacy in ecclesiastical matters being considered an essential prerogative of the kingly office,—that an inevitable consequence of this alliance between Church and State was the fabrication, adoption, and imposition of State creeds and of prescribed forms of worship, the very existence of which was an outrage on religious liberty, while, at the same time, a spirit of persecution was necessarily fostered which was always at enmity with human rights—always opposed to the progress of truth, the diffusion of knowledge, and the cultivation of intelligence, and incessantly interposing the obstructions of bigotry and fanaticism in the way of the moral, social, and political advancement of mankind.

As the connection between Church and State could not exist without the elevation of the creed of that Church into a standard of orthodoxy, and the proscription of all other forms of faith and worship at variance therewith, so it necessarily followed that as civilization advanced, as knowledge extended, and human intelligence became more inquiring and enlightened, differences of religious opinion would grow more decided, and dissent from State-imposed creeds become a matter of conscientious necessity. This is exactly what did take place, and the history of the Church from its first alliance with the State is mainly occupied with the complications thereby created. There is little more, in addition, than a record of differences and dissensions on matters theological, and of persecutions resulting therefrom, that have bedaubed every page of ecclesiastical history with blood!

Thus the connection between Church and State under the Christian Dispensation was but a continuance of the same system that had its origin in Pagan and barbarous ages—with this important difference, however, that a milder and more tolerant spirit appears to have animated heathen rulers.

History records no such extensive religious persecutions—such prolonged and calamitous wars and horrible butcheries during the fifteen centuries preceding the Christian era, as did take place, and crimsoned the Christian world with blood, during the fifteen subsequent centuries ! Christian philosophy failed to infuse a spirit of charity and of justice into the councils of churchmen, as well as into the ecclesiastical administration of Christian governments, and miserably failed solely, as we believe, because of the corrupting, counteracting influences resulting from the connection between the Church and the State.

This connection has always been productive of evil, as the records of every nation testify, and we will now see that the inherent wickedness of the system is even more forcibly demonstrated by the sanguinary events that distinguished and followed the Reformation in England, when indeed it might have been expected that the enlightened spirit of Protestantism would have established freedom of opinion and of worship, as among the most precious and the most sacred rights of mankind.⁸

* The sufferings of the early Christians, under what are called the “*ten persecutions*,” have obviously been greatly exaggerated. The arbitrary determination of the periods of persecution as “ten” is altogether fanciful. “The ingenious parallels of the *ten* plagues of Egypt, and of the *ten* horns of the Apocalypse, first suggested this calculation to the ecclesiastical writers of the fifth century ; and in their application of the faith of prophecy to the truth of history, they were careful to select those reigns which were indeed the most hostile to the Christian cause. But these transient persecutions served only to revive the zeal, and to restore the discipline of the faithful ; and the moments of extraordinary rigour were compensated by much longer intervals of peace and security. The indifference of some princes, and the indulgence of others, permitted the Christians to enjoy, though not perhaps a legal, yet an actual and public toleration of their religion.”—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, chap. xvi.

The letter of ancient Roman law allowed no right of private judgment in religious matters, nor have we any example in history of such a right having existed when religion was made an affair of State. The law of

Rome, as described by Cicero, was—"Let no one have any separate worship, nor hold any new gods; neither to strange gods, unless they have been publicly adopted, let any private worship be offered."—*De Legibus*, c. 11, s. 8. But though the letter of the law was thus intolerant, practically the policy of the Roman Empire, which guided the administration of the law, was essentially tolerant, and contrasts most mercifully with that which superseded it under a Christian régime.

We find among Pagan records no such ferocious decrees as those that emanated from Christian councils for the butchery of so-called Christian heretics. The severities that the early Christians had to endure under the Pagan emperors, during the "ten persecutions" embraced within a period of three hundred years, were merciful, indeed, in comparison with the horrible sufferings inflicted by a ruthless spirit of persecution on the Vaudois and the Albigeois alone. Under the rulers of Pagan Rome there was no thirty years' war to extirpate the right of private judgment. Pagan priests never set in motion a tribunal so iniquitous as the *Christian Inquisition*! Nero, the first persecutor of the Christians, has no claims to transcend in atrocity the sainted hero of St. Bartholomew. And, in like manner, all the sanguinary deeds of the Roman persecutors, from Nero, the first, down to Diocletian, the last and most savage of them all, have been far excelled in horrible extent and wickedness by Christian princes. It appears, indeed, an inflexible law that religion—no matter what its form may be—when it becomes a matter of Statecraft in the hands of kings or priests, necessarily gives rise to a policy of persecution.

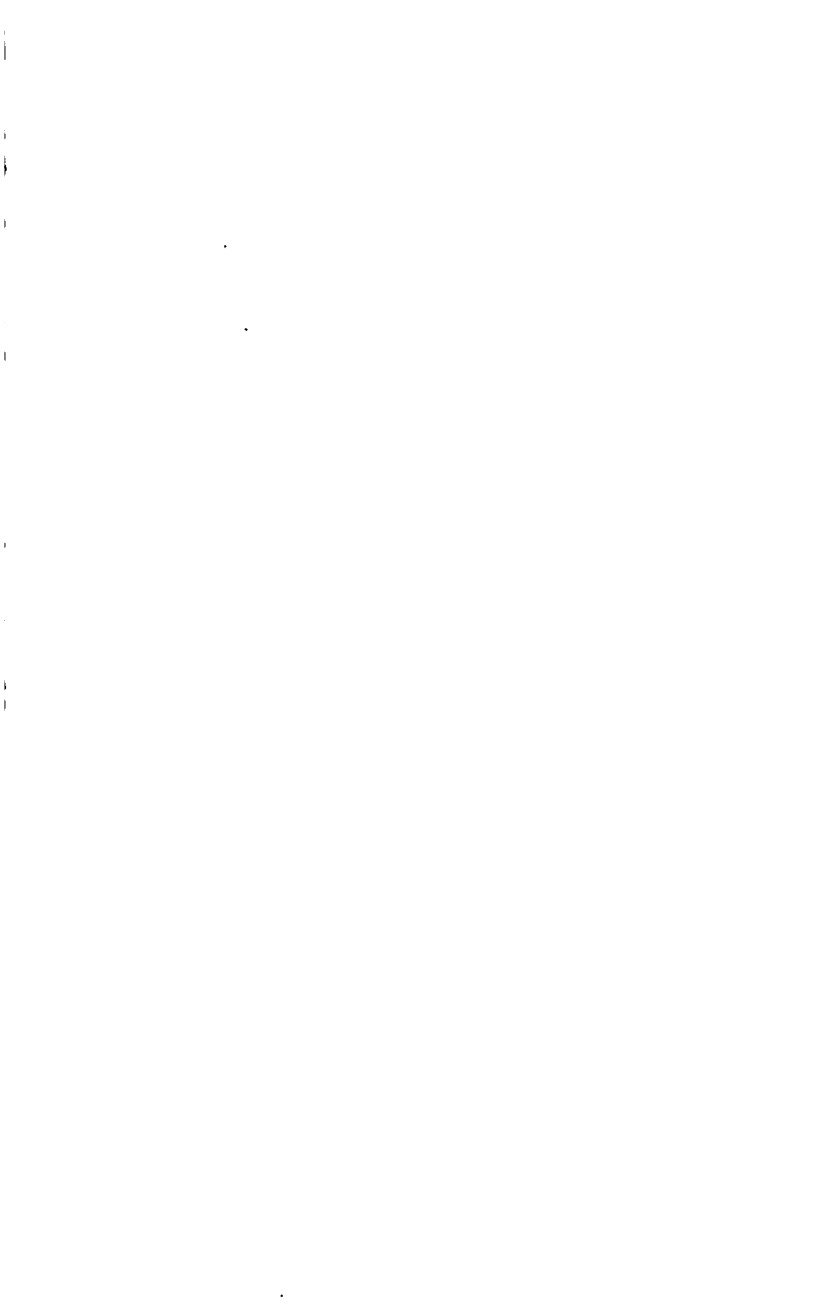
CHAPTER II.

*On the Connection between Church and State under
Henry VIII.—1509–1547.*

THE great revolution in the religious opinions of the people of England known as "The Reformation," is usually ascribed to Henry VIII., as having been effected by him. After Henry had passed the meridian of life, he became so ruthless a tyrant that those who desired to throw all possible discredit on the Reformation, always paraded him in the foreground as its author. But, at best, he was only a link in the great concatenation of events which resulted in the Reformation. That, by his contest with Rome he powerfully contributed to facilitate so desirable a change is not disputed; nevertheless, there is no clearer fact in history than that he never contemplated—much less effected—the radical revolution in religious opinion which constituted the great distinguishing feature of the Reformation. Gray's famous lines—

"When love could teach a monarch to be wise,
And Gospel-truth first dawned in Bullen's eyes,"

are suggestive of what is totally inconsistent with historical truth, for Henry never professed "Gospel-truth" in any material sense different from what Rome professed and taught. As a matter of fact he never contemplated any departure from the faith and worship of Rome. Even while, with the concurrence of the nation, he was overthrowing the long-established usurpations of the Papacy within the realm, the Parliament—faithfully representing the people in this respect—declared



in the strongest possible manner that no intention was harboured of disturbing "Catholic unity." What Henry, his Parliaments, and the nation aimed at were *political* ameliorations, not the correction or change of *religious dogma*.

To understand, therefore, Henry's position and influence in relation to the English Reformation, it is necessary to regard that memorable event in the twofold aspect it presents, first as a *political movement*, or a protest against the usurpations of the Papacy in temporal affairs, and second as a *religious movement*, or a protest against the deviations from primitive forms of Christian faith and worship, which the ignorance and superstition of ages had introduced, accumulated, and sanctified.

[In essentials, says Froude,¹ the English Reformation "was *political* rather than *spiritual*."] In the political movement Henry was an important actor. He contributed most materially to its successful issue, but he did so only by adopting and carrying out, more boldly and fully, the principles of national policy avowed and partially acted on by many previous monarchs.

With respect, however, to the Reformation as a religious movement, Henry had no direct concern either in designing, or promoting, or sympathizing with it. True, the success of the political movement necessarily reacted on religious opinion, and in this way the development of the religious Reformation was indirectly favoured, because all partial improvement tends, in the nature of things, to stimulate general progress. But within the scope of Henry's policy, he never included any material change in religious dogma and worship. On the contrary, all his measures were directly and avowedly hostile to the Reformation in this respect—severely antagonistic and repressive.

The Reformation necessarily received its twofold aspect

¹ History of England, ii. 401.

from the Papal usurpations and corruptions against which it was aimed, and very imperfect notions of the causes and character of that great revolution will be entertained unless this distinction is clearly observed. It is most essential, therefore, to always bear in mind, that Rome claimed, and largely exercised, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, a *political sovereignty* as well as a *religious supremacy*. Not only did ambitious Popes aspire to be the infallible expounders of the one true saving faith, but their pretensions also extended to a supremacy equally unlimited and infallible in all temporal matters. Papal ambition was without bounds—it was universal. It comprehended sovereign authority over the whole world. “*We*,” said Boniface VIII., “*who*, by the permission of God, *command the whole universe!*” The world was to be under a theocracy, with Rome for its visible seat, and the Popes as Vicegerents, to whom all Sovereigns, Principalities, and Powers, were to yield absolute submission and obedience, not only in spirituals, but also in all temporal affairs. Such was the magnificent dream of universal dominion which the Popes sought to realize during the dark ages.

It is to be observed, however, that while the supremacy of the Popes, in matters of faith, was generally acquiesced in, and unquestioned by the States of Western Europe from the tenth to the sixteenth century, their claims to a co-extensive jurisdiction in temporal affairs never met with any such general acknowledgment. Occasionally, indeed, sovereigns and States were compelled to endure the humiliation of yielding submission to Papal pretensions in such matters, because they were, for the time, powerless to resist; but when opportunity served, a reaction always followed.

In England, from the Norman Conquest, A.D. 1066, to the reign of Henry VIII., A.D. 1509, there was a constant resistance offered to the claims of temporal supremacy advanced by the Popes. This contest between the prerogatives of the

Crown and the liberties of the nation on the one hand, and Papal pretensions to a supreme sovereignty on the other, was maintained with varying degrees of intensity, and equally varying fortune, for nearly five centuries; but its tendency always was towards the development of national liberty.

As Bishop Burnet observes, "The Kings of England having claimed in all ages a power in ecclesiastical matters equal to what the Roman Emperors had in that Empire, they exercised this authority both over the clergy and laity, and did at first erect bishoprics, grant investitures in them, call synods, make laws about sacred as well as civil concerns, and in a word, they governed their whole kingdom. Yet when the Bishops of Rome did stretch their power beyond either the limits of it in the primitive Church, or what was afterwards granted them by the Roman Emperors, and came to assume an authority in all the churches of Europe, as they found some resistance everywhere, so they met with a great deal in this kingdom, and it was with much difficulty that they gained the power of giving investitures, receiving appeals to Rome, and of sending legates to England, with several other things, which were long contested, but were delivered up at length, either by feeble princes, or when kings were so engaged at home or abroad, that it was not safe for them to offend the clergy."²

But while the Kings and Parliament of England asserted their prerogatives in opposition to the usurpations of Rome, they never entertained the idea of questioning the infallible truthfulness of the Roman faith. Even in the darkest ages, while the supreme authority in ecclesiastical government claimed by the Popes was vigorously, and often successfully resisted, the supremacy of the Papal Vicegerency in matters of faith was implicitly received, obeyed, and upheld.

When Henry VIII. ascended the throne the power of the Papacy was very considerable in England, but its exercise was

² History of the Reformation, part i. book ii.

legally restrainable, though not actively restrained, by the paramount sovereignty of the King, for all regulations emanating from Rome which affected the government and discipline of the Church had no authority by law in England without the King's consent. It is true there was then, as now, an Ultramontane party, that claimed for the Pope an unconditional and absolute supremacy; but the English Church did not accept that doctrine, nor would the King or the Parliament tolerate it.

To all outward appearances Papal supremacy was never more firmly established in England than during the late reign, yet in this its period of greatest seeming security and strength, powerful influences were silently at work, which foreshadowed its inevitable overthrow. Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, ascended the throne as Henry VII. under circumstances that made him anxious to fortify his title by virtually acknowledging, like the ignoble John, that he held his dominions as feudatory to the Church of Rome.

Henry was the only surviving representative of the House of Lancaster. "There were many titles," says Hume, "on which he could found his right to the crown; but no one of them free from great objections, if considered with respect either to justice or to policy."³ The undoubted legal right to the Crown was in the Princess Elizabeth of York; but in order to effect the overthrow of the tyrant usurper, Richard III., the partisans of both the Houses of York and Lancaster agreed to unite, on condition that Henry Tudor should marry the Princess Elizabeth, and thus terminate the calamitous "Wars of the Roses."⁴

³ Hist. Eng., c. xxiv.

⁴ "The tyrannical reign of King Richard III. gave occasion to Henry Earl of Richmond to assert his title to the Crown—a title the most remote and unaccountable that was ever set up, and which nothing could have given success to, but the universal detestation of the then usurper Richard."—*Blackstone's Commentaries*, b. i. c. 3.

On the battle-field of Bosworth, 22nd August, 1485, Henry was hailed by his victorious followers with acclamations of *Long live Henry the Seventh!* and they conferred upon him the honour of an impromptu coronation. He accordingly assumed the regal dignity, and, without waiting for his marriage with the Princess Elizabeth, assembled Parliament in November, and claimed the Crown by hereditary right, which, he said, God had acknowledged by granting him a victory over all his enemies.

Obsequious as Parliaments were in that century, Henry could not obtain an endorsement of his fictitious claim of hereditary right. They merely enacted—"That the inheritance of the Crown should rest, remain, and abide in the King," which, when taken in conjunction with his marriage, constituted a sufficiently unexceptional title to secure an undisturbed succession to his children.⁵

"Two passions, his fear of losing the crown, and his avarice, are properly the distinguishing characters of Henry's reign. They are the two master-keys which let us into the motives of his conduct."⁶ Hence after all the precautions he had taken to secure an unimpeachable title to the throne, "the King," says Hume,⁷ "was so little satisfied with his own title, that in the following year *he applied to Papal authority for a confirmation of it*; and as the Court of Rome gladly laid hold of all opportunities which the imprudence, weakness, or necessities of princes afforded it to extend its influence,

⁵ Henry had a mean jealousy of the undoubtedly superior title of the Princess Elizabeth to the throne. "It was perfectly against his grain that he married her, for he would undoubtedly have dropped her if he could, or durst have done it."—*Acta Regia*, iii. 45.

"The Parliament," says Blackstone, "carefully avoided any recognition of Henry VII.'s right, which, indeed, was none at all."—*Commentaries*, b. i. c. iii.

⁶ *Acta Regia*, iii. 41.

⁷ Hist. Eng., c. xxiv.

Innocent VIII., the reigning Pope, readily granted a bull in whatever terms the King was pleased to desire.⁸ All Henry's titles, by succession, marriage, parliamentary choice, even conquest, are there enumerated ; and to the whole, the sanction of religion is added."

The unseemly deference thus paid by the King to the Pope, the extraordinary anxiety he evinced to obtain Papal authority to sanctify his assumption of regal dignity, and his craving after Papal bulls, dispensations, and blessings to fortify his position, afford unmistakable evidence of the superstitious reverence with which Papal pretensions were then regarded. "England had, for above three hundred years," says Burnet, "been the tamest part of Christendom to the Papal authority," and the eagerness with which the King sought to fence himself round with Papal sanctions proves how powerfully they appealed to the reverential, though credulous, feelings of the nation.

The founder of the line of Tudor came, observes Hallam, "not certainly to an absolute, but a vigorous prerogative, which his cautious, dissembling temper, and close attention to business, were well calculated to extend." The circumstances of the times were highly favourable for an ambitious ruler to extend his prerogatives, and all those circumstances Henry turned to the best advantage. The desolating wars of the Roses had, for a period of thirty years, decimated the population and impoverished the country. The power of the great

⁸ Besides this bull, as Henry and the Princess Elizabeth "were akin to each other from the third to the fourth degree of consanguinity, they stood in need of a dispensation ;" accordingly the Pope's Nuncio in England granted one by virtue of the authority vested in him. But Henry's suspicious disposition feared some flaw in it, "desired and obtained another dispensation of the Pope himself ; but, because this made no mention of the former dispensation, and was dated likewise after the consummation of the marriage, he procured a third, which confirmed what he had from the Nuncio."—*Acta Regia*, iii. 44.

Barons, whose influence had so often overshadowed and overawed the Crown, was rudely shattered, and what had survived the conflict of arms unshaken, Henry, in the plenitude of his fears and his despotism, destroyed by attainders, ruinous fines, and the axe of the executioner.

Thus the Royal prerogative became exalted to a degree never before attained in English history. "Uncontrolled by apprehension or opposition, the King," observes Hume, "gave full scope to his natural propensity; and avarice, which had ever been his ruling passion, being increased by age and encouraged by absolute authority, broke all restraints of shame and justice." Any resistance to his authority only served to confirm his power, and lead to the more absolute exercise of his prerogative, so that, with a subservient Parliament to register his decrees, he triumphed as he pleased over the liberties of the nation.

With respect to the Church, he had no desire to interfere with the Papal authority, the exercise of which in his favour he had so meanly solicited. In one respect only did he interfere with the privileges possessed by the clergy. He found that the immunities claimed under what is known as the *Benefit of Clergy* had given rise to enormous abuses, of which the laws he passed are sufficient evidence. It was enacted that, if a priest, &c., had been guilty of fornication, adultery, or incest, his ordinary might commit him to prison, there to abide, for a time proportionate to the quality of his offence—that clerks convicted of felony should be burned in the hand, and that for no offence could benefit of clergy be pleaded or allowed more than once.⁹

Beyond these reforms Henry did not venture with the Church, nor perhaps had he the inclination.¹⁰ But the power

⁹ 1 Hen. VII. c. 4; 4 Hen. VII. c. 13.

¹⁰ Henry was evidently grossly superstitious, but the indulgence of credulous folly was kept in check by his avarice. "The King was desirous,"

he acquired during a reign of twenty-three years, and which he transmitted in all its plenitude to his successor, so exalted and extended the prerogatives of the Crown, that when the contest with Rome commenced, the Royal authority at once asserted its supremacy, and there was no influence in the country—among the Nobility, the Church, or the Commons—to withstand the will of the King. Nor indeed was there any desire to resist it, for by that time popular feeling was so directed, and opinion so matured, that emancipation from the supremacy of Rome in temporal matters was evidently desired by the nation.

Thus the events of his father's reign combined to prepare the national mind for a great change in the relations that had, for more than three centuries, existed with Rome. With respect to the purely religious aspect of the Reformation, Hallam observes that—"No revolution has ever been *more gradually prepared* than that which separated almost one-half of Europe from the communion of the Roman See; nor were Luther and Zwingle any more than occasional instruments of that change, which, had they never existed, would, at no great distance of time, have been effected under the names of some other reformers. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the learned doubtfully and with caution, the ignorant with zeal and eagerness, were tending to depart from the faith and rites which authority prescribed. But probably not even

says Lord Bacon, "to bring into the house of Lancaster celestial honour, and became suitor to Pope Julius, to canonize King Henry the Sixth for a saint; the rather, in respect of that his famous prediction of the King's own assumption to the Crown. Julius referred the matter, as the manner is, to certain cardinals, to take verification of his holy acts and miracles; but it died under the reference. The general opinion was, that Pope Julius was too dear, and that the King would not come to his rates."—*Life of Henry VII.* "The excessive sum which the Court of Rome demanded for the ceremony made the King alter his mind; and he contented himself with removing that prince's bones which lay at Windsor, to those of his ancestors at Westminster."—*Acta Regia*, iii. 53.

Germany was so far advanced on this course as England. Almost one hundred and fifty years before Luther, nearly the same doctrines as he taught had been maintained by Wycliffe, whose disciples, usually called Lollards, lasted as a numerous, though obscure and proscribed sect, till, aided by the confluence of foreign streams, they swelled into the Protestant Church of England."¹¹

But England was far riper for a *political* than for a religious reformation—more anxious and better prepared to withstand Papal exactions, and the tyrannous exercise of Papal supremacy in temporal matters generally, than to fling off all at once the credulous faith and cherished observances hallowed to them by the superstitious veneration of ages. Indeed, as we have said, Henry VIII. never contemplated—even after he had separated from Rome—a departure from the Roman faith. He had reigned eighteen years before the question of his divorce arose—to which event the *religious Reformation* in England has been so wrongfully ascribed. Luther commenced his revolt from Rome in 1517. The Pope in 1520 promulgated a bull condemning, as poisonous heresies, forty-one propositions selected from his works. Luther's resistance to this bull established the Reformation, both political and religious, in Germany. Henry, so far from favouring this Reformation, entered the lists with ardour against Luther by sanctioning the publication of a work, under his own name, in defence of the seven sacraments.¹² For this service Pope Leo X. bestowed

¹¹ Hallam's Constitutional Hist. of Eng., Pop. Ed., vol. i. p. 57.

¹² Von Raumer conjectures that the title of "Defender of the Faith" was conferred on Henry as much for having got inserted in the treaty with the Emperor Charles V. the clause—"That the rights of the Pope should be respected," as for having published the work on the seven sacraments. (*Political Hist. of England, &c.*, i. 13.) Burnet is positive the work was not written by Henry; and Soames (*Hist. of the Reform.*, vol. i. p. 171) says it is probable that other persons besides the King were concerned in its composition. In this opinion Hallam concurs. "From

on him the title *Fidei Defensor*, by a bull dated October, 1521—a title which still adheres to the British Crown. *It was not until six years afterwards that the question of his divorce began to be agitated.*

The affair of the divorce arose in this way. During the reign of Henry VII., it was considered politic to form an alliance with Spain against French influence, to cement which Henry's eldest son, Arthur, Prince of Wales, was married in November, 1501, to Katharine, Infanta of Spain. In the following April the Prince died, and there was no issue of the marriage. The King, being still desirous of maintaining a strict alliance with Spain, and, as Burnet remarks, "having no mind to let so great a revenue as Katharine had in jointure be carried out of the kingdom, it was proposed that she should be married to the younger brother, Henry, now Prince of Wales." To remove all doubt as to the validity of such a marriage, Pope Julius II., who strongly favoured the alliance of England and Spain against France, granted a dispensation, and the betrothal contract was formally concluded when Henry was only twelve years of age.

Conscientious scruples, it is alleged, deterred Henry VII., notwithstanding the Papal dispensation, from having the marriage consummated; but he died in 1509, and his son, succeeding to the throne, resolved that the dispensation should be acted on, and six weeks after his accession married Katharine, with whom he lived in apparent happiness for eighteen years. The Queen had several children, but they all died young, except the Princess Mary; and it was in 1527, when it was proposed to contract her in marriage with a French prince, that

Henry's general character and proneness to theological disputation, it may be inferred," he says, "that he had at least a considerable share in the work, though probably with the assistance of some who had more command of the Latin language."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 59. To push the circulation of the work amongst the faithful, the Pope proclaimed a *ten years' indulgence* to all who read it.—*Nare's Burghley*, i. 24.

the French ambassador expressed doubts concerning her legitimacy, as "begotten in a marriage that was contracted against a divine precept, with which no human authority could dispense."

Whatever Henry's motives were—whether, as some allege, he was really disturbed about the succession, or by conscientious doubts as to the lawfulness of his marriage, and regarded the death of his children as a divine punishment for the sin he committed in contracting it, or whether he had grown tired of the Queen, who was older than himself, and whose person had become indifferent to him, and had then set his affections on Anne Buleyn, as others affirm—whatever the motive was, there is no question as to the fact, that he gave ear to the doubts suggested, and ultimately applied to Rome for a divorce.¹³

Clement VII. then occupied the Pontifical throne. He was ambitious for the aggrandizement of his family, to effect which he was ever ready to sacrifice the interests of the

¹³ The theological view of the subject, "which had been so long disregarded, had probably less weight with the King," says Von Raumer, "than that Katherine, a woman of the purest morals, was gradually getting older; that her weak health allowed no hope of a male heir; that her Spanish dignity, as well as the excess and the severity of her religious exercises, was doubly disagreeable to a man of pleasure like Henry, since he had fallen in love with her maid of honour, the young, sprightly, and accomplished Anne Boleyn."—*Political Hist.*, &c., i. 15.

"It is certain," remarks Hallam, "that Henry's marriage with his brother's widow was unsupported by any precedent, and that although the Pope's dispensation might pass for a cure of all defects, it had been originally considered by many persons in a very different light from those unions which are merely prohibited by the canons. . . it does not appear manifest at what time his scruples began, nor whether they preceded his passion for Anne Boleyn. This, however, seems the most probable supposition; yet there can be little doubt that weariness of Katherine's person, a woman considerably older than himself, and unlikely to bear more children, had a far greater effect on his conscience than the study of Thomas Aquinas or any other theologian."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. i. p. 60.

Church. Naturally irresolute, faithless, and vacillating in his general policy, the insincerity that marked his conduct respecting the divorce was further excited by the embarrassing political complications in which he had managed to involve himself. The Emperor Charles V., the most powerful monarch in Europe, had secured a complete mastery over Italy by the battle of Pavia, February 24, 1525. Katharine, Queen of England, was his aunt, and when the matter of the divorce was mooted in 1527, she appealed to him for protection.

The Pope, in the meantime, had entered into a secret league with the princes of Italy, and the Republic of Venice, to deliver the country from the oppressive dominion of Charles, and this "Holy League"—as it was styled from the Pope heading it—was supported by Henry VIII., and Francis I. of France, who was anxious to avenge the disastrous defeat he had sustained at Pavia.

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Thus the Royal prerogative became exalted to a degree never before attained in English history. "Uncontrolled by apprehension or opposition, the King," observes Hume, "gave full scope to his natural propensity; and avarice, which had ever been his ruling passion, being increased by age and encouraged by absolute authority, broke all restraints of shame and justice." Any resistance to his authority only served to confirm his power, and lead to the more absolute exercise of his prerogative, so that, with a subservient Parliament to register his decrees, he triumphed as he pleased over the liberties of the nation.

With respect to the Church, he had no desire to interfere with the Papal authority, the exercise of which in his favour he had so meanly solicited. In one respect only did he interfere with the privileges possessed by the clergy. He found that the immunities claimed under what is known as the *Benefit of Clergy* had given rise to enormous abuses, of which the laws he passed are sufficient evidence. It was enacted that, if a priest, &c., had been guilty of fornication, adultery, or incest, his ordinary might commit him to prison, there to abide, for a time proportionate to the quality of his offence—that clerks convicted of felony should be burned in the hand, and that for no offence could benefit of clergy be pleaded or allowed more than once.⁹

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he acquired during a reign of twenty-three years, and which he transmitted in all its plenitude to his successor, so exalted and extended the prerogatives of the Crown, that when the contest with Rome commenced, the Royal authority at once asserted its supremacy, and there was no influence in the country—among the Nobility, the Church, or the Commons—to withstand the will of the King. Nor indeed was there any desire to resist it, for by that time popular feeling was so directed, and opinion so matured, that emancipation from the supremacy of Rome in temporal matters was evidently desired by the nation.

Thus the events of his father's reign combined to prepare the national mind for a great change in the relations that had, for more than three centuries, existed with Rome. With respect to the purely religious aspect of the Reformation, Hallam observes that—"No revolution has ever been *more gradually prepared* than that which separated almost one-half of Europe from the communion of the Roman See; nor were Luther and Zwingle any more than occasional instruments of that change, which, had they never existed, would, at no great distance of time, have been effected under the names of some other reformers. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the learned doubtfully and with caution, the ignorant with zeal and eagerness, were tending to depart from the faith and rites which authority prescribed. But probably not even

says Lord Bacon, "to bring into the house of Lancaster celestial honour, and became suitor to Pope Julius, to canonize King Henry the Sixth for a saint; the rather, in respect of that his famous prediction of the King's own assumption to the Crown. Julius referred the matter, as the manner is, to certain cardinals, to take verification of his holy acts and miracles; but it died under the reference. The general opinion was, that Pope Julius was too dear, and that the King would not come to his rates."—*Life of Henry VII.* "The excessive sum which the Court of Rome demanded for the ceremony made the King alter his mind; and he contented himself with removing that prince's bones which lay at Windsor, to those of his ancestors at Westminster."—*Acta Regia*, iii. 53.

Germany was so far advanced on this course as England. Almost one hundred and fifty years before Luther, nearly the same doctrines as he taught had been maintained by Wycliffe, whose disciples, usually called Lollards, lasted as a numerous, though obscure and proscribed sect, till, aided by the confluence of foreign streams, they swelled into the Protestant Church of England."¹¹

But England was far riper for a *political* than for a religious reformation—more anxious and better prepared to withstand Papal exactions, and the tyrannous exercise of Papal supremacy in temporal matters generally, than to fling off all at once the credulous faith and cherished observances hallowed to them by the superstitious veneration of ages. Indeed, as we have said, Henry VIII. never contemplated—even after he had separated from Rome—a departure from the Roman faith. He had reigned eighteen years before the question of his divorce arose—to which event the *religious Reformation* in England has been so wrongfully ascribed. Luther commenced his revolt from Rome in 1517. The Pope in 1520 promulgated a bull condemning, as poisonous heresies, forty-one propositions selected from his works. Luther's resistance to this bull established the Reformation, both political and religious, in Germany. Henry, so far from favouring this Reformation, entered the lists with ardour against Luther by sanctioning the publication of a work, under his own name, in defence of the seven sacraments.¹² For this service Pope Leo X. bestowed

¹¹ Hallam's Constitutional Hist. of Eng., Pop. Ed., vol. i. p. 57.

¹² Von Raumer conjectures that the title of "Defender of the Faith" was conferred on Henry as much for having got inserted in the treaty with the Emperor Charles V. the clause—"That the rights of the Pope should be respected," as for having published the work on the seven sacraments. (*Political Hist. of England, &c.*, i. 13.) Burnet is positive the work was not written by Henry; and Soames (*Hist. of the Reform.*, vol. i. p. 171) says it is probable that other persons besides the King were concerned in its composition. In this opinion Hallam concurs. "From

on him the title *Fidei Defensor*, by a bull dated October, 1521—a title which still adheres to the British Crown. *It was not until six years afterwards that the question of his divorce began to be agitated.*

The affair of the divorce arose in this way. During the reign of Henry VII., it was considered politic to form an alliance with Spain against French influence, to cement which Henry's eldest son, Arthur, Prince of Wales, was married in November, 1501, to Katharine, Infanta of Spain. In the following April the Prince died, and there was no issue of the marriage. The King, being still desirous of maintaining a strict alliance with Spain, and, as Burnet remarks, "having no mind to let so great a revenue as Katharine had in jointure be carried out of the kingdom, it was proposed that she should be married to the younger brother, Henry, now Prince of Wales." To remove all doubt as to the validity of such a marriage, Pope Julius II., who strongly favoured the alliance of England and Spain against France, granted a dispensation, and the betrothal contract was formally concluded when Henry was only twelve years of age.

Conscientious scruples, it is alleged, deterred Henry VII., notwithstanding the Papal dispensation, from having the marriage consummated; but he died in 1509, and his son, succeeding to the throne, resolved that the dispensation should be acted on, and six weeks after his accession married Katharine, with whom he lived in apparent happiness for eighteen years. The Queen had several children, but they all died young, except the Princess Mary; and it was in 1527, when it was proposed to contract her in marriage with a French prince, that

Henry's general character and proneness to theological disputation, it may be inferred," he says, "that he had at least a considerable share in the work, though probably with the assistance of some who had more command of the Latin language."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 59. To push the circulation of the work amongst the faithful, the Pope proclaimed a *ten years' indulgence* to all who read it.—*Nare's Burghley*, i. 24.

the French ambassador expressed doubts concerning her legitimacy, as "begotten in a marriage that was contracted against a divine precept, with which no human authority could dispense."

Whatever Henry's motives were—whether, as some allege, he was really disturbed about the succession, or by conscientious doubts as to the lawfulness of his marriage, and regarded the death of his children as a divine punishment for the sin he committed in contracting it, or whether he had grown tired of the Queen, who was older than himself, and whose person had become indifferent to him, and had then set his affections on Anne Buleyn, as others affirm—whatever the motive was, there is no question as to the fact, that he gave ear to the doubts suggested, and ultimately applied to Rome for a divorce.¹³

Clement VII. then occupied the Pontifical throne. He was ambitious for the aggrandizement of his family, to effect which he was ever ready to sacrifice the interests of the

¹³ The theological view of the subject, "which had been so long disregarded, had probably less weight with the King," says Von Raumer, "than that Katherine, a woman of the purest morals, was gradually getting older; that her weak health allowed no hope of a male heir; that her Spanish dignity, as well as the excess and the severity of her religious exercises, was doubly disagreeable to a man of pleasure like Henry, since he had fallen in love with her maid of honour, the young, sprightly, and accomplished Anne Boleyn."—*Political Hist.*, &c., i. 15.

"It is certain," remarks Hallam, "that Henry's marriage with his brother's widow was unsupported by any precedent, and that although the Pope's dispensation might pass for a cure of all defects, it had been originally considered by many persons in a very different light from those unions which are merely prohibited by the canons. . . it does not appear manifest at what time his scruples began, nor whether they preceded his passion for Anne Boleyn. This, however, seems the most probable supposition; yet there can be little doubt that weariness of Katherine's person, a woman considerably older than himself, and unlikely to bear more children, had a far greater effect on his conscience than the study of Thomas Aquinas or any other theologian."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. i. p. 60.

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the Reformation he gives evidence that "frightening threatenings" were employed to coerce the English Universities. In his *Collection of Records*, part iii. book ii. No. 17, there are letters from the King intimating that if the University did not give a decision pleasing to their "liege Lord," "it should not be to their quietness and ease thereafter."

The "youth of the University" who had interfered in the affair, and who appear to have been in favour of the Queen, are warned that *non bonum est irritare crabrones*—it is not safe to put your hand in a wasps' nest. Wood, the historian of Oxford, says—"It was an ill thing for a prince by his letters to frighten people out of their conscience, and by menaces force them to say what must please him." But Henry had no scruples on that point.

Among the Bishops who pronounced against the Papal claims to ecclesiastical supremacy, were such zealous Romanists as Bonner, Gardiner, Stokesley, and Tonsal, who declared "they found no ground for it in the Scripture," and furthermore, that "no constitution of the Popes is binding in any Church, except it be received by it; and in the daily practice of the Canon law the customs of Churches are pleaded against Papal constitutions, which shows their authority cannot be from God, otherwise all must submit to their laws. And from the latter contests up and down Europe, about giving investitures, receiving appeals, admitting of legates, and Papal constitutions, it was apparent that the Papal authority was a tyranny, which had been managed by cruel and fraudulent arts, but was never otherwise received in the Church than as a conquest to which they were constrained to yield. And this was more fully made out in England, from what passed in William the Conqueror and Henry II.'s time, and by the Statutes of Provisors in many kings' reign, which were still renewed till within a hundred years of the present time."

Upon these grounds they concluded, observes Burnet, who summarizes all their arguments and authorities, "that the Pope's power in England had no foundation, neither in the law of God, nor in the laws of the Church or of the land, and had been managed with as much tyranny as it had begun with usurpation, the exactions of their courts were everywhere heavy, but in no place so intolerable as in England; and though many complaints were made of them in these last three hundred years, yet they got no ease, and all the laws about provisors were still defeated and made ineffectual; therefore, they saw it was impossible to moderate their proceedings; so that there was no other remedy but to extirpate their pretended authority, and henceforth to acknowledge the Pope only Bishop of Rome, with the jurisdiction about it defined by the ancient Canons: and for the King to reassume his own authority, and the prerogatives of his crown, from which the Kings of England had never formally departed, though they had for this last hundred years connived at an invasion and usurpation upon them, which was no longer to be endured."¹⁶

But while thus most effectually exposing, denouncing, and repudiating Papal usurpations, they delivered very elaborate opinions concerning the nature and extent of the King's ecclesiastical prerogatives—his power over spiritual persons, in spiritual causes, and in all matters appertaining to religion, which were productive of most pernicious effects. It is of importance that these opinions should be set forth, for they were unfortunately embodied in the law of England, and, having been arbitrarily acted on by Henry and his successors, became a prolific source of national calamities. In point of fact, *all the powers hitherto usurped and exercised by the Popes were simply transferred to the King*, and from the despotic exercise of such extravagant, unjust, and unchristian pre-

¹⁶ Hist. Reform., part i. book ii.

rogatives—which were inconsistent with the common rights of Englishmen—arose Protestant Dissent as a national organization, and those iniquitous persecutions, the cruelty and the wickedness of which exhibited the natural fruits of the alliance between Church and State, under the supreme headship of the crown.

The King was declared to be not only supreme in all ecclesiastical matters, over all spiritual persons, and in all spiritual things, with power to make laws binding on conscience; but the Bishops, in their extreme servility, affirmed that to him “*specially and principally it pertaineth to defend the faith of Christ and his religion, to conserve and maintain the true doctrine of Christ, and all such as be true preachers and settlers forth thereof; and to abolish abuses, heresies, and idolatries, and to punish with corporal pains such as of malice be the occasion of the same.*”

Such is the foundation of the Erastianism that steeped the Reformed Church of England in blood—that corrupted its whole history, and is yet destined to work its destruction as a State institution. It was with some pretence of reason that the Popes aspired to such a stupendous assumption of ecclesiastical authority, for they advanced pretensions to an infallible judgment in declaring “the true doctrine of Christ,” and defining “heresies;” but neither the Crown, the Parliament, nor even the Convocations of England ever assumed to be clothed with such infallibility—though the fearful history of persecutions, extending over some three hundred years, shows that they often acted on the assumption.

The ecclesiastical supremacy of the King was first affirmed by Convocation, and afterwards embodied by Parliament in the *Act of Supremacy* as follows :—

“Albeit the King’s Majesty justly and rightfully is and ought to be the supreme Head of the Church of England, and so is recognized by the clergy of this realm in their

Convocation, yet nevertheless, for corroboration and confirmation thereof, and for increase of virtue in Christ's religion within this realm of England, and to repress and extirp all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same ; be it enacted, by authority of this present Parliament, that the King and Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme Head on earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the imperial Crown of this realm, as well the title and style thereof, as all the honours, dignities, pre-eminences, jurisdictions, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity belonging and appertaining ; and that our said Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, *shall have full power and authority to visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, whatsoever they be*, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction ought or may lawfully be reformed, most to the pleasure of Almighty God, the increase of virtue in Christ's religion, and for the conservation of the peace, unity, and tranquillity of this realm—any usage, custom, foreign laws, foreign authority, prescription, or any other thing or things to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.”¹⁷

In this Act culminated the “ Reformation ” effected in England under Henry VIII. The extent of that “ Reformation ” was in reality *nothing more than substituting the King for the Pope* ! The ecclesiastical supremacy claimed by Rome was transferred, *without any limitation*, to the King, his heirs and successors, as “ *justly and rightfully* ” a prerogative of the Crown ! Such is the foundation on which rests the connection between the Church and the State—a corrupting association by which the Church became the creature of the State, and

¹⁷ 26 Henry VIII. c. i.

from which sprung the odious maxims of "the right divine of kings to govern wrong," and of "no bishop, no king." The pernicious policy thus imposed on the State resulted in detestable acts of tyranny, that brought Charles I. to the block, made James II. a fugitive outcast, and altered the succession to the throne. It was this unhallowed connection that thwarted and retarded the religious Reformation in England, Scotland, and Ireland—that discouraged and paralyzed as far as it could the spirit of free and pure Protestantism—polluting what it could not pervert, and perverting what it could not destroy. From this unholy alliance emanated the policy of persecution which, for three centuries, strove with unrelenting cruelty to stifle the voice of free conscience—that made the enjoyment of civil rights dependent on conformity to a State creed—that punished with pains and penalties the exercise of Christian liberty, and always interposed barbarous obstructions in the way of the intellectual, the moral, and the social progress of the nation.

The first baneful fruit of this unchristian Act was the introduction of an all-important addition to the existing law of high treason. An acknowledgment of the King's "Headship" became a test of loyalty! This necessitated the passing of another Act, by which it was provided, that any person or persons who denied the "Headship," or who should *wish, will, or desire*, to deprive the King of the dignity, title, or name, shall be adjudged traitors, and that every such offence shall be adjudged high treason! ¹⁸

Respecting the terrible powers thus committed to the government, Froude observes, that "comprehensive as the statute appears, it was still further extended by the interpretation of the lawyers. In order to fall under its penalties it was held *not to be necessary that positive guilt should be proved* in any one of the offences specified; it was enough if a man

¹⁸ 26 Henry VIII. c. 13.

refused to give *satisfactory answers* when subjected to official examination. At the discretion of the King or his ministers *the active consent* to the supremacy might be required of any person on whom they pleased to call, under penalty to the recusant of the dreadful death of a traitor."¹⁹

But while thus passing Acts of Parliament constituting the King, instead of the Pope, supreme Head of the Church, and clothing him with the prerogatives of Christ's Vicegerent—while thus uprooting the ecclesiastical supremacy claimed by the Popes, and in so far furthering the *political Reformation* in England, the King and the Parliament took the most decided measures to guard against the supposition that they had any sympathy with Lutheran doctrine—that they entertained the slightest idea of "separating from the unity of the faith," or repudiated, in any particular, implicit adherence to the doctrines of "the holy Roman and Apostolic Church!"

This unreserved and emphatic declaration of their unqualified acceptance of Roman dogma, they embodied in an Act of Parliament which abolished the payment of Peter's Pence, and other forms of tribute that annually enriched Rome at the expense of England. While such exactions by which the English nation had been allured and beguiled for centuries were peremptorily forbidden in future, it was expressly declared that no thing or things contained in the Act should "be hereafter interpreted or expounded that his Grace (the King), his nobles and subjects, intended by the same to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church, *in anything concerning the articles of the Catholic faith of Christendom.*"²⁰

But it was impossible that a change so vast and fundamental as was effected in the ecclesiastical system of England by Henry, could take place without its salutary influence extending to the religious belief of which that system had been the

¹⁹ Hist. Eng., ii. 330.

²⁰ 25 Henry VIII. chap. xxi.

offspring. The measures that struck down the time-honoured usurpations of the Papacy, necessarily tended to arouse public attention to the impeachments of its religious dogmas with which all Germany was then resounding.

Intercourse with the Low Countries, and the progress of the art of Printing, had spread a knowledge of the Lutheran controversy throughout England. A zeal for religious truth had long slumbered among considerable sections of the people, and was still actively cherished by a few devoted thinkers who inherited somewhat of the inspiration of that glorious morning star of religious liberty—John Wycliffe. The nation was on the eve of a great revolution of opinion. Even among the ministers and courtiers of Henry a scepticism concerning Papal dogma and observances had begun to prevail, and religion had scarcely any existence beyond a lifeless formalism. Whatever, therefore, tended to disturb the minds of men, to excite thought, create doubt, and promote discussion, necessarily contributed to accelerate that revolution.

It was in this way that the policy of Henry—contrary to his interest and desire—operated potently in favour of the religious Reformation. What he commenced for a selfish purpose, at best, he adhered to with an obstinate impetuosity to exalt his prerogative and feed his avarice. The policy to which, little by little, he was irretrievably committed, necessarily tended to uproot the very religious belief it was his avowed purpose to sustain and defend! An Anglo-Roman Catholicism he desired to uphold and preserve, with himself as King-Pope, its Supreme Head on earth; and with this view he kindled the fires of Smithfield, and imbrued his soul with the blood of martyrs. He lived and died in the belief and observance of the Roman faith—impotent, with all his power, to stay the progress of enlightenment, and aiding unconsciously in the development of mental liberty, to

extinguish which he unscrupulously directed all the ruthless energies of his despotic government.

That the mind of Henry never opened to receive the faintest scintillation of "Protestant truth" admits of no doubt—that he continued a professing believer in Roman doctrine to his dying hour, is most conclusively proved by his actions.

"Henry, *notwithstanding his having broken with the Pope*," observes Von Raumer, "*hated Luther and his doctrines as much as ever* ; would not on any account be called a heretic, or give the Roman Catholic princes any further offence."—*Political Hist. of Eng., &c.*, i. 34.

De Thou, who claimed Henry as a good Catholic, as regards the faith, says—"He changed nothing in religion, after his divorce, but the abolition of the Papal supremacy, which he held in execration."—*Thouanus*, l. 3.

No stronger evidence could be adduced of Henry's adherence to the Roman faith and worship than that furnished by his celebrated creed of Six Articles, which he promulgated in an Act of Parliament known as the *Bloody Statute*. It is entitled "An Act for abolishing diversity of opinions in certain articles concerning Christian religion." The preamble recites that the King "considering the blessed effects of union, and the mischiefs of discord, since there were many different opinions, both among the clergy and laity, about some points of religion, had called this Parliament and a Synod at the same time, for removing these differences, where Six Articles were proposed, and long debated by the clergy : and the King himself had come in person to the Parliament and Council, and opened many things of high learning and great knowledge about them ; and that he, with the assent of both houses of Parliament, had agreed on the following articles :—

"1. That, in the sacrament of the altar after the consecration, there remained no substance of bread and wine, but

under these forms the natural body and blood of Christ were present.

“2. That communion in both kinds was not necessary to salvation to all persons by the law of God, but that both the flesh and blood of Christ were together in each of the kinds.

“3. That priests, after the order of priesthood, might not marry by the law of God.

“4. That vows of chastity ought to be observed by the law of God.

“5. That the use of private masses ought to be continued ; which, as it was agreeable to the law of God, men received great benefit by them.

“6. That auricular confession was expedient and necessary, and ought to be retained in the Church.”

The penalties of this Act, 31 Henry VIII. c. 14, well entitled it to the distinguishing epithet “*bloody*.” All persons who spoke, preached, or wrote against the first article, were to be judged heretics, and to be burnt without any abjuration, and to forfeit their real and personal estates to the King. Those who preached, or obstinately disputed against the other articles, were to be judged felons ; and to suffer death as felons, without benefit of clergy. And those who, either in word or speech, spoke against them, were to be prisoners during the rest of their life, and forfeit their goods and chattels to the king for this first offence, and, if they offended so the second time, they were to suffer as felons. The Archbishops and Bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, were commissioned, with such others as the King should name, to hold courts quarterly or oftener for the enforcement of the Act, and all ecclesiastical incumbents were enjoined to read it in their churches once every three months.

Such were some of the first blessed fruits of the connection of the State with the Church in England under Henry VIII., and the spirit of this infamous Act we will find pervading all

whole monastery to a lady who made a pudding that he liked ! Dr. Johnson relates that the House of Commons, having refused at first to do something he had ordered, thought better of it and consented, whereupon he told them—"It is well you did, or truly your heads should have been upon Temple Bar !" This must refer to what Spellman relates, in his *History of Sacrilege*, respecting the passing of the first bill by the Commons for the suppression of the 376 monasteries, and the confiscation of their goods to the King. He says that—

"The Bill stuck long in the Lower House, and could get no passage, when the King commanded the Commons to attend him in the forenoon in his gallery, where he let them wait till late in the afternoon, and then coming out of his chamber, walking a turn or two among them, and looking angrily on them, first on one side and then on the other, at last—'*I hear,*' said he, '*that my bill will not pass ; but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads !*' and, without other rhetorick, returned to his chamber. Enough was said ; the bill passed, and all was given him as he desired."

It was under such a brutal and remorseless monster of lust and tyranny that the connection between the Church of the Reformation and the State was first established in England. All the clergy acquiesced, passively at least, in the King's violent measures against Rome, and in his usurpation of the Headship of the Church. Among the Bishops, Fisher of Rochester was the only one who would not take the oath acknowledging the King's Headship, for which contumacy he had his own head taken off. A few Carthusian monks, who had led blameless lives, also revolted against swearing to the King's ecclesiastical supremacy, and some were cruelly murdered, while others were exposed to lingering deaths by torturing devices. With these exceptions the whole clergy of England renounced the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope

within the realm of England, while they adhered, as before, to his infallible guidance in matters of faith.

“First, the corruption, and then the servile selfishness of the clergy,” says Sir James Mackintosh, “cast at the feet of a tyrant the whole spiritual liberty of England; and when even, for their own sakes, they would have recalled the gift, it was too late.” From a calm consideration of the events of this reign two conclusions appear inevitable:—

First,—that as regards the reformation of religious opinion Henry never contemplated any essential departure from the standard of Rome. In faith and worship he lived and died a Roman Catholic. So far from having had any sympathy with Lutheranism, or with any sort of dissent from Rome on matters purely spiritual, he was quite as ready to burn Lutherans and Anabaptists for questioning the Pope’s spiritual supremacy, as he was to inflict a similar terrible death on all conscientious Roman Catholics who dare refuse to make an explicit acknowledgment of his own ecclesiastical supremacy and Church Headship!

Second,—that whatever healthful impetus the religious reformation received in this reign resulted from the political policy pursued by Henry for purely political purposes, and without any design on his part that his measures should favour, even indirectly, a religious reformation. Cromwell, perhaps, was the only man who was far-seeing enough to calculate the effect of the various disturbing causes he assisted so materially in setting in motion—the principal of which was the suppression of the monasteries, and the confiscation of such an immense amount of Church property.

The suppression of monasteries, and the appropriation of their property to purposes other than those the founders intended, was first undertaken in this reign by Cardinal Wolsey, under the express authority of the Pope.

“Wolsey,” as Turner observes, “was the last Church

legislation on religious matters through many succeeding generations. While Henry, under the Treason Act, mercilessly doomed to the block or the stake all conscientious Roman Catholics—even of distinguished learning and loyalty, like Sir Thomas More—who refused to acknowledge his ecclesiastical supremacy and popeship in matters of faith ; with equal wickedness he racked, tortured, burned, beheaded, and consigned to martyrdom in various ways all who dared question the infallible truth of any one of his six cherished doctrines which the *Bloody Statute* embodied ! At last humanity was relieved by his death on the 28th January, 1547, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign.

“ A catalogue of his vices,” observes Hume, “ would comprehend many of the worst qualities incident to human nature : violence, cruelty, profusion, rapacity, injustice, obstinacy, arrogance, bigotry, presumption, caprice ; but neither was he subject to all these vices in the most extreme degree, nor was he at intervals altogether destitute of virtue.” “ I do not deny that he is to be numbered among the ill princes,” says Bishop Burnet, “ yet I cannot rank him with the worst.” “ He was,” observes Mosheim, “ a prince who, in vices and in abilities, was surpassed by none who swayed the sceptre in this age.” “ But the vices of this prince,” remarks Robertson, “ were more beneficial to mankind than the virtues of others.”

“ To say that Henry VIII. was the reformer of his people,” observes D'Aubigné, “ is to betray an ignorance of history. The kingly power in England by turns opposed and favoured the reform in the Church, but *it opposed before it favoured, and much more than it favoured.*” Henry's character has been summed up as that of a merciless tyrant, “ who never spared man in his anger, or woman in his lust.” “ No communion,” says Bogue and Bennet, “ covets the honour of his name ; and, while the Christian regards his religion as the mere off-

spring of his passions and his pride, the civil historian pronounces him one of the greatest tyrants who ever occupied the British Throne."

"His reign was the most tyrannical, arbitrary, and cruel in the English history. What was developed in England during his reign was rather an effect of the general excitement of people's minds, than proceeding from the will or profound views of the King."—*Salmon's Critical Review of the State Trials*, p. 11.

Henry was such a ruthless monster that he seriously contemplated the murder of his own daughter, the Princess Mary; because, educated religiously by her good mother, she was not hypocrite enough to hail, at command, her father as "God's Vicegerent and Christ's Vicar!" To the influence of Gardiner, of Cromwell, and of Cranmer, has been variously ascribed her preservation, but nothing certain is known on the subject beyond this—that she took an active part in conciliating her detestable parent by stifling the voice of her own conscience and acknowledging his ecclesiastical supremacy and headship. Not only that, but she had to go so far as to profess cordial concurrence in all his ecclesiastical legislation, and—refinement of cruelty!—to profess a profound belief in the illegality of her mother's marriage, and in her own consequent bastardy! Whatever the amount of milk of human kindness Mary possessed, it is no wonder it should have turned to gall under the persecutions she endured in the reigns of both her father and brother. *See her submission to the King, in Burnet's History of the Reformation*, p. 1, b. 3.

Hallam has remarked that "a single suspicion in the dark bosom of Henry VII., a single cloud of wayward humour in his son, would have been sufficient to send the proudest peer of England to the dungeon and the scaffold." This is true, and if father and son had confined themselves to the slaughter of peers, justice, on the average, might have been

fairly meted out, for there were few peers in those days who did not merit by their crimes the retribution of a dungeon or a scaffold. But the ferocity of Henry VIII. was something appalling. No Roman tyrant was more revengeful—more insatiable for blood. Because Cardinal Pole refused to obey his summons, and return from abroad to be butchered in England, Henry seized his mother, the Countess of Salisbury, and daughter of the Duke of Clarence, then a venerable lady seventy years of age, and wholly innocent of any crime. Cromwell obtained her conviction from the House of Lords by bill of attainder, without trial, or the production of any legal evidence, and she suffered a cruel death on the scaffold. She was the last of the Plantagenets.

It will be observed that, among the articles of faith contained in the *Bloody Statute*, nothing is definitely declared concerning the doctrine of Purgatory; yet Henry commences his last will by earnestly begging the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, and the whole company of heaven, to pray to God continually for him, and he bequeathes £600 sterling per annum in land to the Dean of Windsor, that he may order masses for his soul continually.²¹ “Though,” says Hume, “he destroyed all those institutions established by his ancestors and others for the benefit of *their souls*, he was yet determined, when the hour of death was approaching, to take care, at least, of his own future repose, and to adhere to the safer side of the question.”

According to Fuller, he gambled away, to a large extent, the money he obtained by the suppression of the monasteries; and Stowe relates that he staked a remarkable fine ring of bells in London, which were great favourites with the people, and called Jesus' Bells, on a throw of dice with Sir Miles Partridge, who won, and the very next day took down the bells and sold them. It is also stated that he gave away a

²¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xv. p. 110.

dignitary of the ancient system, who exemplified to the dullest mind in England the corruptions and evils of the Pope's permitted supremacy. By obtaining the Legatine authority, he possessed the full Papal power in his own country, and he used it as it was used elsewhere. His oppressions and peculations were made leading articles of his impeachment, but he precluded all punishment by two irresistible answers. The King and Parliament had consented to his taking the dignity of legate *a latere*, from the Pope; and he had not exceeded the Papal privileges and exercised rights. *His offensive exertion of them against the Established Church of this country reconciled its prelates to the abolition of that supremacy, which was principally applied to pecuniary extortions.*

"We can hardly take a safer guide to the feelings of the English hierarchy of that day, as to Papal oppressions and usurpations, than the too celebrated Bonner, who became under Mary their most remorseless champion. Yet he declared that the Pope exercised in England *an atrocious and bitter tyranny*, and while he was called a servant of servants, was but *a rapacious wolf in the clothing of a sheep.*"—*Turner's Modern History of England, Part Second, p. 39.*

Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, one of the most learned, virtuous and honourable Prelates of that depraved age, when the suppression of the lesser Monasteries was first mooted in Convocation, strenuously opposed the measure, the danger of which he illustrated by referring to the fable of the axe that wanted a handle, which he applied by saying—"and so, my Lords, if you grant the King these smaller monasteries, you do make him a handle, whereby, at his own pleasure, he may cut down all the cedars within your Libanus."

At this time it was rumoured that the Pope had named Fisher for a Cardinal's hat, which being reported to Henry, he indignantly exclaimed—"Well, let the Pope send him a Cardinal's hat when he will. Holy Mother! he shall wear it."

on his shoulders then, for I will leave him never a head to set it on." And he kept his word. For soon after, this venerable and upright Prelate, whose character and services Henry had, from his accession to the throne up to the period of the divorce proceedings, professed to regard with veneration and undying gratitude, was condemned by an obsequious and corrupt Parliament, on an indictment for high treason, because he refused to acknowledge, on oath, the King's Headship of the Church and supremacy in all ecclesiastical matters. For the same offence the estimable Sir Thomas More also suffered death.

~~The vast amount of plunder acquired by Henry, and shared by his characterless courtiers,~~ on the suppression of the smaller Monasteries, only, as Fisher predicted, whetted their insatiable cupidity for more. Henry, when his own rapacity was excited, hesitated at the employment of no means for its gratification, but complained bitterly to Cromwell when the unbounded rapaciousness of the unscrupulous and venal parasites who composed his following pressed their claims to share in the spoils of the Church. "By Our Lady," he exclaimed, "the cormorants, when they have got the garbage, will devour the dish." But Cromwell suggested that there was an abundance of "garbage" yet available, as the larger Monasteries had not been touched. "Tut, man," said the King, "my whole realm would not staunch their maws." And he was right.

Without any compunction, advantage was taken of an insurrection in the North, excited by the spoliation of the Church, to complete the suppression and confiscation of all religious foundations. Thus, altogether, six hundred and forty-five Monasteries, ninety Colleges, two thousand three hundred and seventy-four Chantries and Free Chapels, and one hundred and ten Hospitals, were suppressed and destroyed.

This placed at the disposal of the King an enormous amount

of property, landed and otherwise, the total value of which may be estimated as reaching nearly fifteen millions sterling of our day. Hume estimated the total annual rental of the Kingdom at that time as amounting to three millions, while the annual revenue of all the suppressed Houses amounted to £142,914 12s. 9½d., or about the one-and-twentieth part of the whole rental of the Kingdom !

Besides, nearly four millions sterling additional may be set down as the value of the movable property seized and sold, or given away by the King, such as Church plate, the rich decorations of shrines, gold and silver images, precious stones, and valuable ornaments of various kinds. Yet, notwithstanding all this rapacious devastation, there remained a considerable amount of Church plunder still unappropriated, which served to whet the insatiable maws of the "much-lauded glorious apostolic Reformers" in the following reign !²²

However desirable it was in the interests of National freedom, progress, and enlightenment that the terrible incubus of Papal Ascendency should be overthrown in England, still the infamous means employed can admit of no palliation ; and, more regrettable still, the evil consequences resulting from such means cling as a curse to the Established Church even to the present day.

By one fell swoop the whole religious and educational establishments, such as they existed, however faulty, were

²² The vast wealth placed at the disposal of the King by the dissolution of the Religious Houses was so recklessly squandered that it neither enriched the Crown nor was beneficial to the nation. Great as that wealth admittedly was, there is good reason for concluding that it was very considerably underrated. In his *Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire*, Dr. Barton says that "the estates of the religious houses were supposed to be really worth *ten times more than they were rated at*, even at the time of their dissolution ; and if to this we add the difference in the value of money between that time and the present, one would think that such an addition to the revenue of the Crown might have been sufficient almost to have superseded the necessity of any other taxes."

swept away, and this was done with a careless, depraved, and ruthless ignorance, that we have to regret the consequences even in our own times. Among the Spoliators there was no regard for priceless antiquities. Drake, in his *Eboracum*, gives a vivid description of the ruinous pillage that took place in York when the religious and charitable institutions of that ancient city became the prey of wasteful spoliation. "No sooner," he says, "was the word given *sic volo, sic jubeo*, but down fell the Monasteries, the Hospitals, Chapels, and Priories in the city, and with them, for company, I suppose, full eighteen Parish Churches, the materials and revenues of all converted to secular uses. It is shocking to think how far these depredations were carried; for, not content with what they could find above ground, they dug open vaults and graves, in search for imaginary treasure, tossed the bones out of stone coffins and made use of them for hog-troughs, whilst the tops went to the covering of some old wall, of which many a one about this city does yet bear testimony. A piece of such inhumanity as I believe the most savage nation in the world would not have been guilty of.

"For the lucre of a pound of brass, they would deface the most memorable inscription, and carried their zeal so far against Mass Books, Rituals, Missals, and the like, that with them were destroyed many of our ancient English Historians. In short, we should not have had one of those memorable remains of our forefathers' actions, perhaps, at this day left us, if an act of Parliament in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign had not put a stop to such violent proceedings."

But a far greater and more irreparable injury was inflicted on the Nation by the Vandal ignorance and destruction of the invaluable Libraries which the religious houses possessed. We take, as a sample of how these grand repertories of ancient learning were dealt with, the description given by Bayle, Bishop of Ossory, in the preface to Leland's "*New*

of property, landed and otherwise, the total value of which may be estimated as reaching nearly fifteen millions sterling of our day. Hume estimated the total annual rental of the Kingdom at that time as amounting to three millions, while the annual revenue of all the suppressed Houses amounted to £142,914 12s. 9½d., or about the one-and-twentieth part of the whole rental of the Kingdom !

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By one fell swoop the whole religious and educational establishments, such as they existed, however faulty, were

²² The vast wealth placed at the disposal of the King by the dissolution of the Religious Houses was so recklessly squandered that it neither enriched the Crown nor was beneficial to the nation. Great as that wealth admittedly was, there is good reason for concluding that it was very considerably underrated. In his *Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire*, Dr. Barton says that "the estates of the religious houses were supposed to be really worth *ten times more than they were rated at*, even at the time of their dissolution ; and if to this we add the difference in the value of money between that time and the present, one would think that such an addition to the revenue of the Crown might have been sufficient almost to have superseded the necessity of any other taxes."

swept away, and this was done with a careless, depraved, and ruthless ignorance, that we have to regret the consequences even in our own times. Among the Spoliators there was no regard for priceless antiquities. Drake, in his *Eboracum*, gives a vivid description of the ruinous pillage that took place in York when the religious and charitable institutions of that ancient city became the prey of wasteful spoliation. "No sooner," he says, "was the word given *sic volo, sic jubeo*, but down fell the Monasteries, the Hospitals, Chapels, and Priors in the city, and with them, for company, I suppose, full eighteen Parish Churches, the materials and revenues of all converted to secular uses. It is shocking to think how far these depredations were carried; for, not content with what they could find above ground, they dug open vaults and graves, in search for imaginary treasure, tossed the bones out of stone coffins and made use of them for hog-troughs, whilst the tops went to the covering of some old wall, of which many a one about this city does yet bear testimony. A piece of such inhumanity as I believe the most savage nation in the world would not have been guilty of.

"For the lucre of a pound of brass, they would deface the most memorable inscription, and carried their zeal so far against Mass Books, Rituals, Missals, and the like, that with them were destroyed many of our ancient English Historians. In short, we should not have had one of those memorable remains of our forefathers' actions, perhaps, at this day left us, if an act of Parliament in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign had not put a stop to such violent proceedings."

But a far greater and more irreparable injury was inflicted on the Nation by the Vandal ignorance and destruction of the invaluable Libraries which the religious houses possessed. We take, as a sample of how these grand repertories of ancient learning were dealt with, the description given by Bayle, Bishop of Ossory, in the preface to Leland's "*New*

Year's Gift to King Henry the Eighth,"—an authority that cannot well be disputed.

"A greate nombre of them whyche purchased those superstycyouse mansyons (monasteries) reserved of those librarye bookes, some to serve theyr jakes, some to scoure theyr candlestyckes, and some to rubbe theyr bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sop-sellers, and some they sent over see to the book-bynders, not in small nombre, but at times whole shyppes full to the wonderynge of foren nacyons : yea, ye universytes of this realme are not all clere in thys detestable fact. But cursed is that bellye whych seketh to be fedde with such ungodlye gaynes, and so depelye shameth hys natural conterye.

"I knowe a merchant manne, whyche shall at thys time be namelesse, that boughte ye contentes of two noble Lybraryes for forty shyillynges pryce : a shame it is to be spoken. Thys stuffe hath he occupyed in the stede of grey paper, by the space of more than these ten yeares to come. A prodygyouse example is thys to be abhorred of all men whyche love thyr nacyon as they shoulde do. The monkes kepte them undre dust, ye ydle headed prestes regarded them not, theyr latter owners have most shamefully abused them, and ye covetouse merchantes have solde them awaye into foren nacyons for moneye."

This is all very deplorable, yet it is only an exceedingly faint colouring of the evils that followed the so-called, and much misunderstood, Reformation of the merciless Henry the Eighth. He concreted the foundations of the Established Church of England with Pillage and Blood, and the curse of its origin destroyed its after usefulness, adheres to it still, and presages its speedy and inevitable downfall.

Henry enforced his diabolical will, and maintained his position by indulging in a ravenous thirst of blood, combined with prodigal venality to his obsequious parasites.

The distribution of such an immense amount of property, as the suppression of all Religious Foundations placed at his disposal, among favoured nobles and courtiers, naturally made them dread any reconciliation with Rome, which it was but reasonable they should fear as likely to lead to a general disgorgement and restitution of spoil. This circumstance we will find operated most powerfully in strengthening "the party of the Reformation" in the next reign, and also in frustrating all the efforts of Mary to re-establish the old order of things. In this way the mercenary motives of these recipients of Church spoil, compelled them to sustain and aid a great movement, which at heart—and with any convictions they really possessed—they secretly condemned.

CHAPTER III.

On the progress of the Reformation in England under Edward VI., and the development of the persecuting spirit against Protestant Dissent—A.D. 1547–1553.

WHEN Edward VI. succeeded to the throne, in the tenth year of his age, the relationship between the State and the Church was mainly regulated by the Act of Supremacy and by the "Bloody Statute." Under the former, the Church was deprived of all liberty of self-government, and did not even possess the power of assembling in Convocation without the licence of the Crown, but existed merely as a State institution in acknowledged subjection to the regal Headship. Under the latter barbarous statute, the faith of the Church was arbitrarily settled and established by the authority of Parliament, in conjunction with the infallibility of the Crown, and that faith, as far as it went, was in perfect conformity with Roman teaching.

Under such circumstances two parties were formed at Court, and now aspired to ascendancy in directing the policy of the Government. One desired that the affairs of the Church should remain exactly as they were. They had no desire to encourage any change for fear that further innovations might follow, and they were of opinion that reformation had been already carried quite too far. The great majority of the Bishops and of the clergy heartily concurred with this party, whose influence, however, was far from being in proportion to its mere numerical strength.

Those who entertained opposite opinions may be properly

designated "the party of the Reformation," which was composed of very discordant materials, containing unhappily too little that was characterized by purity and integrity. There were some who earnestly desired to see that great work honestly carried out for the sole glory of religion, and they were for abolishing all abuses, and sweeping away every proved corruption in the doctrine, worship, and government of the Church. The leading members of this section of reformers were distinguished for intelligence, learning, and zealous disinterested devotion to the cause; but they had no political power. During the late reign, those who remained at home had been compelled to conceal their opinions, while many who sought refuge among the Protestants abroad had returned to England with more advanced and enlightened views concerning reformation.

The leading reformer among Churchmen was Archbishop Cranmer, who, says Burnet, "being now delivered from that too awful subjection that he had been held under by King Henry, resolved to go on more vigorously in purging out abuses." But Cranmer, with all the zeal for reform—with all the prudence and the wisdom so bountifully ascribed to him, had too much the disposition of a courtier and the spirit of a priest, which influenced his whole policy and conduct. His mind never entertained a comprehensive project of reform. He never had an idea of establishing the Church in England on a free Scriptural basis, apart from contaminating alliance with the State. On the contrary, he was exceedingly well-disposed to the ecclesiastical supremacy and headship of the King, with all the arbitrary prerogatives connected therewith; and hence, with all his boasted moderation and alleged dislike of violent measures, no Pagan priest or Popish fanatic could have lent himself to persecution with greater heartiness of mind than he did. He was, however, earnestly disposed for some extensive reforms, but he was equally ready to

burn any one who presumed to reform otherwise than as he approved.

It is an unfortunate circumstance that in those days there were no able, high-souled, patriotic men, of uncompromising integrity, to rule at Court ; for the Government of England was then in the Court. It was in truth a terrible misfortune that, with very few exceptions, the most influential supporters of the party of the Reformation were not actuated by pure and laudable motives. The courtiers of the late reign, as a body, were selfish and unprincipled sycophants, who readily professed whatever form of religious belief was pleasing to their fickle and cruel master. Their servility had been richly rewarded by participating in the plunder that accrued from the suppression of the monasteries, and their zeal now for further reformation was nothing more than the offspring of a keen cupidity intent on the anticipation of more booty to be shared.

The riches which most of these rapacious adventurers had acquired from the spoils of the Church, "induced them," says Hume, "to widen the breach between England and Rome ; and by establishing a contrariety of speculative tenets, as well as of discipline and worship, to render a coalition with the mother Church altogether impracticable. Their rapacity also, the chief source of their reforming spirit, was excited by the prospect of pillaging the secular, as they had already done the regular clergy ; and they knew that while any show of the old principles remained, or any regard to the ecclesiastics, they could never hope to succeed in that enterprise."¹

The late King had appointed by will sixteen persons to be his executors, and governors to his son and to the kingdom, during the minority, and also twelve counsellors to assist with their advice. The Earl of Hertford, the young King's maternal uncle, was one of the executors, and the first thing the Council did, he being ambitious, and having, says Burnet,

¹ Hist. Eng., c. xxxiv.

"so great a party among them," was to deviate from the will by appointing him "Protector of the King's realms, and governor of his person." This usurpation of authority was shortly afterwards followed by further changes, which virtually vested in him the whole power of the regal prerogative, and gave him the supreme direction of the government.

The Protector, according to Froude, was "ardent, generous, enthusiastic, and, if ambitious, it was only, as he persuaded himself, to do good." He had been entirely compliant to the imperious will of the late King, but now he identified himself with the "party of the Reformation," so far as was consistent with retaining the Church in complete subjection to the State, while the profession of religion was still to be regarded and enforced as altogether a matter of State policy.

The first significant exercise of authority by the Protector did not speak much for the purity of his motives as a reformer of abuses in either the State or the Church. He and his servile council proceeded to appropriate to themselves such honours and rewards as they were informed the late King had intended to bestow upon them had he lived. Hertford was created Duke of Somerset, and other peerages were distributed, while estates were created out of Church property to pension needy courtiers. The rapacity of high and low was unbounded. "Several to whom the title of baron was offered," says Hume, "refused it, because the other part of the King's promise, the bestowing of estates on these new noblemen, was deferred till a more convenient opportunity. Some of them, however, as also Somerset the Protector, were, in the meantime, endowed with spiritual preferments, deaneries, and prebends. For among many other invasions of ecclesiastical privileges and property, this irregular practice of bestowing spiritual benefices on laymen began now to prevail."

"It may seem strange," observes Burnet, "that the Protector had six good prebends promised him; but it was

ordinary at that time." He complains that the Church was thus "robbed of those endowments and helps it had received from the munificence of the founders of its cathedrals, which had it been done by law, would have been a thing of very bad consequence ; but as it was done, was directly contrary to the Magna Charta, and to the King's Coronation Oath."²

With such motives at work, "Reformation" was certainly driven forward with an irresistible impulse. The commanding influence of Somerset with the King, the Council, and the Parliament, at this period, rendered his authority supreme. But who can wonder that Reformation carried on under such auspices, by such means, and for such ends, proved in many respects a curse to the nation ? Among the people at large, indeed, there was no enthusiasm on the subject, for, as Burnet remarks, "the severities of the late reign about the supremacy on the one hand, and the six articles on the other, made people to stagger and reel between the two religions."

Reformation promoted and directed by ambitious and rapacious nobles, assisted by a greedy swarm of Court parasites, and the venal sycophants of power, who then, for the most part, represented the nation in Parliament, could never have the true interests of religion in view, even if those interests were understood. Hence, we find the relationship between the State and the Church proceeded from bad to worse. The connection established by the late King was not only continued, but confirmed and strengthened, and this disastrous conjunction of incompatible interests extended its corrupting influence over the subsequent policy both of the State and of the Church.

Reformation in any pure, extended, and complete sense, became an impossibility, because it was never desired by those who had the direction of affairs, and also because the basis on which Reformation proceeded precluded the idea of Christian

² Hist. Refor., p. i. b. l.

liberty. Freedom of conscience is totally incompatible with the doctrines of Church and State. The right of private judgment could not co-exist with the supreme headship of the Crown and the arbitrary prerogatives such a monstrous assumption involved. Hence, the Reformation never could be worked fairly out, because a pure Christian Church could never exist on a Pagan basis. And hence also we find this reign distinguished by as despotic an interference, as the preceding, with the sacred immunities of conscience, and with that inherent right of independent judgment which is the very essence of true Protestantism.

"The next step," says Froude, "was to show the Bishops that the change of rulers had not restored their liberty. *They were to regard themselves as possessed of no authority independent of the Crown.* They were no successors of the apostles, but mere ordinary officials; and, in evidence that they understood and submitted to their position, they were required to accept a renewal of their commissions. Cranmer set the willing example, in an acknowledgment that *all jurisdiction, Ecclesiastical as well as Secular, within the realm, only emanated from the Sovereign.* The other Prelates consented, or were compelled to imitate him."³

In this spirit legislation proceeded on the assembling of the first Parliament held in this reign, November, 1547. The policy enforced precluded not only any hope of the establishment of a free national Church, but rendered toleration—such as would protect and preserve the religious liberties of the nation—impossible. The King's prerogative was exalted above all law even by Cranmer himself, who in his address to Edward on his coronation declared that his duties were "*as God's Vicegerent and Christ's Vicar, to see that God be worshipped, and idolatry be destroyed.*"⁴

In order to render further reformation legal it was necessary

³ Hist. Eng., vol. v. p. 10.

⁴ Strype's Cranmer, 144.

to repeal the Bloody Statute ; and at the same time the two penal statutes⁵ against the Lollards, which directed that heretics should be burnt, were also repealed, while extensive ameliorations were made in mitigating the severities of the law of treason. It was also enacted that the King's proclamations should no longer have the same authority as Acts of Parliament, which was the law in the late reign.

These measures were so far good in themselves, but at the same time it was enacted that *all who denied the ecclesiastical supremacy of the boy-King, should for the first offence forfeit their goods and chattels and be imprisoned during pleasure; for the second be subject to premunire; and for the third offence be attainted of high treason!* It was thus obvious that reformation was to proceed on the basis of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown being substituted under the new régime for that of the Popes under the old. The right of private judgment—free thought—the conscience of the nation was to be as much enslaved under the one as under the other, and we will see what all this iniquity led to.

It was consistent with such legislation that Parliament should now proceed to pass an Act by which the remaining "Chantries," comprising some two thousand three hundred odd separate endowments of land,⁶ &c., were taken from the

⁵ 2 Henry IV. c. 14, and 2 Henry V. c. 7.

⁶ These endowments were made for the specific purpose of saying daily masses for the benefit of the souls of the founders. We have noticed that even Henry VIII., in his last will, left an endowment for this purpose, yet some of these very endowments were seized and disposed of by Henry!

Now the rapacious sycophants and hypocrites that crowded the Court of Edward became intent on seizing and dividing among themselves all such Chantry Endowments as had escaped the rapacity of Henry. One of the most detestable characteristics of those who took a leading part in the Reformation, is the astounding hypocrisy they manifested, conjoined with a total insensibility to shame. A false pretence was always on their lips, to justify any iniquity, or palliate any crime.

In this instance the pretence put forward to justify the seizure of the

Church, and bestowed upon the King. By the immense spoil thus acquired and placed at the disposal of the Protector, he was enabled not only to enrich himself and friends, but also to reward his minions, strengthen his influence at Court, and maintain a servile majority in Parliament. Yet it teaches a great moral lesson to find, that within five years this proud, ambitious, powerful noble, the King's uncle and Protector of the realm, with unbounded influence at his command, was deposed, hurled from his pinnacle of greatness, condemned by the wretched sycophants he had brought into power, and perished on the scaffold !

The example of spoliation thus set by the Government became contagious, and extended to every description of ecclesiastical chattel that could be turned into money. "The shrines and the altar-plate at York Cathedral," says Froude, "were sent to the Mint, to be issued in base coin, and parish vestries began to appropriate the chalices, jewels, bells, and ornaments in the country churches, and offer them publicly for sale. The carcass was cast out into the fields, and the vultures of all breeds and orders flocked to the banquet."⁷

Consistently with the policy which was now established to rule in Church and State, a proclamation was issued, on the prorogation of Parliament, in March 1548, against those who innovate or persuade the people from the old accustomed rites

Chantry Endowments was the benefit that would result from "*Converting them to godly uses, such as the endowing of schools, provisions for the poor, and the augmenting of places in the Universities.*" Such is the recital in the preamble of the Act (1 Ed. VI. c. 14), but it was altogether a studied false pretence. "The suppressed endowments fell for the most part into the hands of courtiers ; and all those who had before plundered the clergy, and would willingly have plundered them again, supported these measures, under all kinds of religious pretexts."—*Von Raumer's Political Hist., &c.*, i. 67.

⁷ Hist. Eng., v. 72.

without the King's authority, and forbidding any to preach without a license from the King, or his Bishops, under penalty of imprisonment and other punishments at the King's pleasure ! Burnet says, "some observed against making proclamations with arbitrary punishments, though the Act was repealed that had formerly given so great authority to them. To this it was answered, that *the King by his supremacy might still in matters of religion make new orders and add punishments upon the transgressors.* Yet this was much questioned, though universally submitted to !"

The following year a new Service-book, or *Book of Common Prayer*, framed by direction of the King in Council, was approved by the infallible "Headship," and confirmed by Parliament. The preamble of the Act recites, that "the King, by the advice of the Lord Protector and his Council, had appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury, with other learned and discreet bishops and divines, to draw an order of divine worship, having respect to the pure religion of Christ taught in the Scripture, and to the practice of the Primitive Church, which they, *by the aid of the Holy Ghost*, had, with one uniform agreement, concluded on ; wherefore, the Parliament having considered the book, and the things that were altered or retained in it, they gave their most humble thanks to the King for his care about it, &c., and did enact that all divine offices should be performed according to it, and that such of the clergy as should refuse to do it, or continue to officiate in any other manner, should, upon the first conviction, be imprisoned six months, and forfeit a year's profit of their benefice ; for the second offence, forfeit all church preferments, and suffer a year's imprisonment ; and for the third offence, should be imprisoned during life. And all that should write, or put out things in print, against it, or threaten any clergyman for using it, were to be fined in ten pounds for the first offence ; twenty pounds for the second offence ; and to forfeit

all their goods, and be imprisoned for life upon a third offence."⁸

Could there be a more outrageous burlesque on the solemn concerns of religion than such an Act? Conscience is to be ruled in accordance with a formulary framed by temporising Bishops, whose opinions were a compromise between their convictions and their interests; and what they agreed upon a servile Parliament—composed, for the most part, of illiterate squires and venal nominees—presumptuously prescribed as a mode of worship to a nation! "Of the strange features of such a change," observes Froude, "the strangest was, perhaps, that the official opinion of Convocation was scarcely asked even in form. Parliament now discussed the faith of England, and laymen decided on the doctrines which the clergy were compelled to teach."⁹

It is characteristic of such an Act that it should indulge in blasphemy and allege a falsehood. The authorship of the Service-book is ascribed to the "Holy Ghost," for by such aid it is alleged to have been drawn up. But it is singular that the work was so clumsily performed—so very imperfectly done, that before three years had elapsed the book had to be revised, altered, and re-enacted by Parliament! It is also alleged that the Bishops had all concurred in the book "with one uniform agreement," which is not the fact, as Burnet admits; for the Bishops of Hereford, Chichester, and Westminster dissented, and, Neal adds, the Bishop of Norwich. Eight Bishops voted against the book in committee, and in the Lords the Bill was carried by a majority of 31 to 11, the non-contents being the Bishops of London, Durham, Norwich, Carlisle, Hereford, Worcester, Westminster, and Chichester, with Lords Derby, Dacres, and WyndSOR.¹⁰

⁸ Burnet's Hist. Refor.

⁹ Hist. Eng., v. 142.

¹⁰ To illustrate the scriptural spirit of the Protestantism that presided over the concoction of Edward's Liturgy—to say nothing of the "Holy

This Act was followed by another, which illustrates how ridiculous legislation may become, when it oversteps its proper sphere, and presumes to invade the sacred domain of conscience. It was deemed advisable to regulate *fasting*, and the preamble of the Act assigns a ludicrous jumble of reasons—"that due and godly abstinence from flesh was a means to virtue, and to subdue men's bodies to their soul and spirit, and *was also necessary to encourage the trade of fishing, and that, by eating of fish, much flesh was saved to the country.*" Therefore, it was enacted that none should eat flesh on Fridays, Saturdays, Ember days, in Lent, or any other days that should be declared fast days, under severe penalties. A subsequent Act provided that "the eves before holidays were to be kept as fasts."

An Act was also passed declaring that such forms of ordaining ministers as should be set forth by the advice of such prelates and six divines to be named by the King, and authorized under the Great Seal, should be used, and no other. But the most signal stretch and presumptuous exercise of Royal supremacy was exhibited in the preparation of the Articles of Religion, which were to become the creed of the nation. The Articles were forty-two in number, and, together with a Short Catechism, were "published by the King's authority," as "*God's Vicegerent and Christ's Vicar,*" without even the sanction of Convocation, or the formality of an Act of Parliament! These Articles were subsequently reduced in number to thirty-nine, by Queen Elizabeth; but otherwise no

Ghost and infallibility"—it is only necessary to observe that prayers for the dead were retained. Such prayers necessarily implied a belief not a whit less irrational and superstitious than the Roman doctrine of Purgatory involved. The anointing of the sick with oil was also retained! and the work altogether was so faulty and offensive, that two years afterwards the aid of such infallibility as Church and State commanded, had again to be invoked to amend it!—*Soame's Hist. of the Reformation*, iii. 401-595.

material alteration was made in them, and they stand to our day as the creed imposed on the Church solely by the monstrous prerogative of the Crown.

While the ecclesiastical supremacy of the King was thus manifested in fashioning service-books, rituals, creeds and catechisms, prescribing forms, and regulating fast-days for the good of souls, the encouragement of fisheries, and the saving of flesh, it is not to be supposed that the spirit of persecution—which is an inherent vice of a State religion—was permitted to slumber. Far from it. It was not enough that all the arbitrary Acts we have enumerated were each enforceable by a series of express penalties of peculiar severity—no respect whatever being paid to conscientious dissentients—but it was deemed advisable that a new and more terrible machinery should be set in motion. Accordingly, a *Court of Inquisition* was established, solely by virtue of the King's supreme prerogative, for the punishment of Protestant Dissent; and this detestable tribunal served at once as a precedent and a model for the infamous "Courts," the establishment and proceedings of which disgraced subsequent reigns.

This *Inquisitorial Court* was established April 12, 1549, and a commission was issued to Archbishop Cranmer, certain Bishops, and others,—any three to form a quorum,—“to examine and search after all Anabaptists, heretics, or contemners of the Common Prayer!” According to Burnet, the Inquisitors, in the first instance, “were to endeavour to reclaim them, to enjoin penance, and give them absolution! or if they were obstinate, to excommunicate and imprison, and to deliver them over to the secular arm to be farther proceeded against!”—that is, to be burnt alive; for although the statutes against heresy had been repealed, as already noticed, still it was held that the profession of erroneous doctrine was an offence punishable capitally by the common law, when set in

motion by the King's supreme prerogative as "God's Vicegerent and Christ's Vicar!"

The Inquisitors, says Hume, "were not bound to observe the ordinary methods of trial; forms of law were dispensed with, and if any statutes happened to interfere with the powers of the Commission, they were overruled and abrogated by the Council." In fact, the Inquisition was placed above and beyond the law, and the Inquisitors were not accountable for any exercise they might wantonly make of the terrible powers committed to their discretion. In those deplorable days no Englishman's house was his castle, nor was there any security for liberty or life when once a suspicion of *daring to think* was whispered into the ears of Church and State Inquisitors.

Some Dissenting tradesmen in London were first made to feel the severity of this iniquitous infringement of Magna Charta. They were brought before this odious tribunal, accused of holding speculative opinions on religious matters which—horrible offence!—were at variance with the State Creed! Among other opinions, they reasoned from Scripture that "the baptism of infants was not profitable;" and this was held to be so heinous a crime—so heretical and damnable an opinion—that it was most merciful treatment to burn the wretch alive who would not recant and do penance!

Some who were accused before this tribunal, abjured their opinions rather than suffer martyrdom; but there was one, a lady, Joan Bocher, commonly called Joan of Kent, who was, as Burnet phrases it, "extreme obstinate," and refused to recant. "These were her words," says Burnet:—"She denied that Christ was truly incarnate of the Virgin, whose flesh being sinful, he could take none of it; but the Word, by the consent of the inward man in the Virgin, took flesh of her." For holding this perfectly harmless opinion,—rather honouring





Christ than otherwise,—the grave and learned and reverend founders of Church of Englandism doomed this poor creature to a horrible death !

But, says Burnet, before doing so, “they took much pains about her, and had many conferences with her ; but she was so extravagantly conceited of her own notions, that she rejected all they said with scorn ; whereupon she was adjudged an obstinate heretic, and so left to the secular power !” What could Popery in its very worst days have done more ?

Joan, according to Strype, was a truly sincere and honourable woman. She “was a pious, worthy woman,” says Froude ; and Burnet relates that “the good King was moved to sign a warrant for burning her, but could not be prevailed on to do it ; he thought it a piece of cruelty like that which they had condemned in Papists, to burn any for their consciences. *Cranmer was employed to persuade him to sign the warrant.* He argued from the law of Moses, by which blasphemers were to be stoned ; he told the King he made a great difference between errors in point of divinity and those which were directly against the Apostles’ Creed ;¹¹ that these were

¹¹ Here the Apostles’ Creed is assumed to be a divinely inspired composition drawn up by the Apostles ; and this illustrates the extent and character of the critical learning that presided over the establishment of the Church of England ; for every scholar knows that *there is no proof whatever* of this creed having been composed by the Apostles, or of having had any existence for many generations after their age. It was first heard of when Ambrose and Ruffinus—who flourished in the fourth century—published it, and attributed it to the Apostles ; and from this time its composition was generally so regarded. But, says Mosheim, “all who have the least knowledge of antiquity look upon this opinion as *entirely false, and destitute of all foundation.*” The Creed was first ordered to be constantly repeated during divine worship, in the fifth century, by Peter Gnapheus, Bishop of Antioch. But no matter who composed it, the denial of anything it contains is no just reason why a person should be burned alive. Cranmer’s reasoning altogether is miserable in the extreme, and as he was about the most learned and rational of

impieties against God which a prince, *as being God's deputy*, ought to punish, as the King's deputies were obliged to punish offences against the King's person. These reasons did rather silence than satisfy the young King, who still thought it a hard thing, as in truth it was, to proceed so severely in such cases ; so he set his hand to the warrant with tears in his eyes, saying to Cranmer that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer for it to God. This struck the Archbishop with much horror ;" but the cruel sentence was executed nevertheless.

"This action was much censured," continues Burnet, "as being contrary to the clemency of the Gospel ; and was made oft use of by the Papists, who said *it was plain that the Reformers were only against burning, when they were in fear of it themselves.*" Another victim was Van Pare, a Dutchman, who was accused of saying that "God the Father was only God, and that Christ was not very God." He is represented as having been a man of "wonderful strict life," and Burnet says "he suffered with great constancy of mind, and kissed the stake and faggots that were to burn him." "And," he adds, "in all the books published in Queen Mary's days, justifying the severity against the Protestants, these instances were always made use of, and no part of Cranmer's life exposed him more than this did."

The story of the scene between Edward and Cranmer rests exclusively on the authority of Fox, the martyrologist. "In some of its circumstances," observes Hallam, "the story told by Fox is certainly disproved : but it is not impossible that the young King may have expressed his reluctance to have the sentence carried into execution, though his signature of

the so-called "Fathers of the Reformation in England," a fair opinion may be formed of the profound wisdom engaged in that work—in manufacturing "articles of faith" to which the enlightened intelligence of this age is expected to yield implicit credence.

the warrant was not required.”—*Constitutional Hist.*, i. 96, *note*.

Von Raumer says, that Edward’s reluctance to Joan’s execution “by no means proceeded from a more correct view of the injustice of such cruelties, but from the opinion, that if the woman died while she entertained this error, she would be eternally damned.”—*Political Hist. of England, &c.*, i. 73. Some doubt this, though without any conclusive proof.—*Soame’s Hist. of the Reform.*, iii. 545.

Strype relates, that when Joan was condemned she retorted on her judges with a point and force that might well have startled their consciences, made them pause, and doubt the consistency, as well as the infallibility of their own judgments. “It was not long ago, said she, since *you burned Anne Askew for a piece of bread, and yet came yourselves soon after to believe and profess the same doctrine for which you burned her*; and now you will needs burn me for a piece of flesh, and in the end you will come to believe this also, when you have read the Scriptures and understand them.”—*Ecclesiastical Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 214.

Whatever share Cranmer may have had in promoting the burning of this exemplary lady, it is unquestionable that he made no exertion to prevent the commission of so foul a crime. Under Henry VIII. he acquiesced in, if he did not stimulate, the burning of those who denied Transubstantiation, yet he subsequently embraced their opinions; but his own vacillations and changes could not teach him Christian charity, forbearance, and toleration.

“Such an evidence of the fallibility of human judgment,” says Hallam, “such an example that persecutions for heresy, how conscientiously soever managed, are liable to *end in shedding the blood of those who maintain truth*, should have taught him, above all men, a scrupulous repugnance to carry into effect those sanguinary laws.”—*Const. Hist.*, i. 96.

Joan's judicial murder was so deliberately done, that *eleven months* elapsed between her examination in April, 1549, and her execution in May, 1550. There was, therefore, ample time for reflection, and this is not favourable to the story of Edward's soft-heartedness, which indeed is not favoured by the entry in the Journal he kept of his own reign. The entry merely mentions that "Joan Bocher, otherwise called Joan of Kent, was burnt, for holding, &c., being condemned the year before ; but kept in hope of conversion ; and the 30th April, the Bishop of London, and the Bishop of Ely, were to persuade her, but she withstood them, and reviled the preacher that preached at her death."—*Edward's Journal in Burnet's Collection of Records.*

Such an entry does not read as if the writer felt regret at the fate of Joan, *nor have we any evidence that Edward was averse to persecution, or revolted at the destruction of human life.* There is too much reason to believe he was his father's son in this respect, and that, had he lived, his reign would have been sanguinary enough.

Eleven months after Joan had suffered, we find another entry in his Journal, which certainly betrays no sensibility about burning people alive :—"April 7. A certain Arian of the strangers, a Dutchman, being excommunicated by the congregation of his countrymen, was, after long disputation, *condemned to the fire.*"

The Anabaptists were the most numerous body of Dissenters in England during this reign. They were generally refugees from the Low Countries, compelled to leave their homes by the revolutions of the times, and the exterminating edicts of the Emperor Charles V. Their religious opinions were formed on a foundation essentially Protestant—"that the Scripture was to be the only rule of Christians," and they rejected, as philosophical subtleties or the conceits of superstition, whatever was not directly and plainly conformable there-

with. In England, while their conduct was such as became good subjects—industrious and peaceable—they were a great means of promoting the reformation of religious opinion; for they settled in towns, and by their superior intelligence, Scriptural knowledge, and general acquirements in a dark and illiterate age, became, individually, so many sources of light and centres of conversion. Yet so implacable was the spirit of persecution which—let loose in London by the enlightened founders of Church of Englandism—spread throughout the country, that many of these sincere and truthful Protestants were burnt alive in several towns, because they would not recant opinions conscientiously entertained.¹²

When we find such ruthless intolerance among those who professed to be Christian Reformers—who affected an anxiety to deliver the nation from the tyranny of Rome, and establish the Church of England on a foundation of Scriptural liberty—we can easily understand how it came to pass that the Reformation, corrupted and perverted in its origin, became pregnant

¹² The persecution of the Anabaptists—of whom Bishop Burnet honorably testifies that “*they were generally men of virtue, and of an universal charity*”—commenced under Henry VIII., in 1535, who, as Froude surmises, “was not sorry of an opportunity of showing that his justice was even-handed and that a schism from the Papacy was not a lapse into heterodoxy.” He was so far impartial as to butcher all who denied his own “Headship” of the Church; and burn any one who dissented from the true Papal faith! On the 25th of May, 1535, fourteen Anabaptists, natives of Holland, were condemned to death. Two, a man and a woman, were burned at Smithfield. The other twelve were sent to other towns, there to be burnt.—*Stowe's Chronicle*, p. 571. Latimer gloried in the burning of these poor people. He exulted with savage glee over their sad fate. They had faced death bravely, but he told his congregation that “a brave death is no proof of a good cause.” “There was in the old times,” he said, “another kind of poisoned heretics that were called Donatists; and these heretics went to their execution as they should have gone to some jolly recreation or banquet.”—*Latimer's Sermons*, p. 160. We shall see how some of the merciless persecutors in this and the previous reign became “Protestant martyrs” under Mary!

with fearful calamity to England, while we can scarcely commiserate the condition of the persecutors when their own bloody policy and barbarous arts of persuasion were turned against themselves in the following reign.

Hooper, afterwards a Bishop, was imprisoned in the Fleet because he would not submit to the use of "Romish vestments" in his consecration. He remained in prison until compulsory conformity was extorted from him.—*Strype's Cranmer*, 253.

"Neither Edward nor his State Cabinet can be cleared or defended from the defaming charge of attempting to force the religious conscience, and of *punishing its resistance*. . . . It was equally horrible, whether done by a Cranmer, a Calvin, or a Bonner ; or whether the agonized sufferer was a Jordan Bruno, a Servetus, a Jean Bocher, or a Bishop Latimer. The persecutions in the reign of Edward, and under the Prelacy of Cranmer, consist of persons actually burnt,—of the compulsory changes produced in others,—of the conduct of the Bishops Gardiner and Bonner, who in the next reign retorted the scourge under which they had been made to smart,—and of the behaviour of the crown to the Princess Mary. The persons burnt were happily not many, but were enough to shew the direful principle in actual operation."—*Turner's Modern History of England*, part ii. p. 193.

It is a melancholy fact, that a worse spirit of persecution was never evinced by Pagan Rome against the Primitive Christians, than the unholy alliance between Church and State manifested during this reign, and employed to torture and exterminate Dissenters. Death is the supreme of punishments—beyond death no form of tyranny can extend, Pagan or Christian. Popery, in its darkest ages—in its most truculent moods, ferocious and sanguinary, never excelled the cruelty practised by the illustrious founders of the Reformed Church of England ! The seed sown so plentifully at this

time yielded many a bloody harvest in future generations. A policy of persecution became the distinguishing characteristic of the State Church, and the rights of conscience were recklessly trodden under foot. No liberty was tolerated, save the liberty to assent—accept our teaching, or prepare for the stake as an obstinate heretic, was the only alternative allowed. Even in things indifferent there was no toleration for conscientious dissent, because it was held that, “if things were indifferent in themselves, they were lawful, and it was the subject’s duty to obey when commanded !”

“It might, perhaps, have been expected,” says the Roman Catholic historian, “that the Reformers, from their sufferings under Henry VIII., would have learned to respect the rights of conscience. Experience proved the contrary. They had no sooner obtained the ascendancy during the short reign of Edward, than they displayed the same persecuting spirit which they had formerly condemned, burning Anabaptists, and preparing to burn the Catholics at the stake, for no other crime than adherence to religious opinion.”¹³ It is a singular fact, however, that the persecuting ferocity of the State Church of the Reformation, was always directed with peculiar intensity against Protestant Nonconformists, while Roman Catholics enjoyed great latitude and comparative impunity. No Roman Catholic suffered death in this reign for his religious opinions, while Protestant Dissenters were burnt alive, and this we will find to be a distinguishing feature in the persecutions that raged in subsequent reigns, under Protestant “Vicegerents of God and Christ’s Vicars !”

During the whole of this reign the young King was little better than a puppet in the hands of those who made a pretext of reformation, and employed the high prerogatives of the crown to feed their own rapacity and cruelty, totally regardless of the very principles on which the Reformation

¹³ Lingard’s *England*, vol. viii. p. 257.

professed to be founded, and in consistency with which it could alone be justified. The young King evinced a great regard for the Reformed doctrines; and gave his confidence to Cranmer and the Protector.¹⁴ That his confidence was grossly abused by both, admits of no doubt. Cranmer infused into his mind the most extravagant notions of the kingly prerogative, together with cruel maxims of intolerance and persecution; while the Protector sacrificed the Church and the Reformation, as far as he could, to the aggrandisement of himself and of his faction.

His government was most profuse and corrupt, while he himself acquired vast wealth by the plunder of the Church. It appears that, being desirous of adding to his property in Somersetshire the Episcopal palace at Wells, he required Bishop Barlow to surrender it; but the Bishop hesitating to give away the property of the See, the Duke threatened, if he would not go, "to push him out headlong." This is related

¹⁴ Lingard, for a Roman Catholic, has been very indiscreet in observing that "Edward's religious belief could not have been the result of his own judgment. He was compelled to take it on trust from those about him, who moulded his infant mind to their own pleasure, and infused into it their own opinions and prejudices."—*Hist. Eng.*, vii. 145. What is the point to be made by such observations? How much of the belief of the Roman Catholic, or of any other State Church, is "the result of judgment?" How much of the religious belief of any generation can be considered the pure "result of judgment?" Are not all minds compelled to take their religious belief, in the first instance, "on trust from those about them"—who "mould their infant minds to their own pleasure, and infuse into them their own opinions and prejudices?" And is this not one great reason why error becomes inveterate and difficult of eradication, while truth struggles so slowly onward. Few indeed, and rare, are the instances in which it can be truly said that religious belief is the result of enlightened inquiry and unprejudiced judgment. The millions are the creatures of circumstance, and believe on trust—

"By education most have been misled,
So they believe, because they so were bred;
The Priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man!"

by Froude, and other instances of rapacity are not wanting, though his expenditure has been characterized as "magnificent."

For two years the Protector ruled with supreme and unlimited authority. His government was most disastrous to the interests of the country, and eventuated in the destruction of his own power, the overthrow of all his greatness, and the forfeiture of his life. Warwick, Duke of Northumberland, who rose on his ruin, "was supported by the powerful phalanx of able and dangerous men whose interests committed them to the Reformation—those who had shared or hoped to share in the spoils of the Church or of the State—those who had divided among them the forfeited estates of the Percies, the Howards, the Courtenays, and the Poles, and would support any men or any measures which would prevent reaction."¹⁵ To gain such support the Duke professed to be sincerely attached to the doctrines of the Reformation, though when justly condemned to death in the next reign, his dying declaration was a confession that he had played the hypocrite, as he had not changed his religious opinions from conviction, but merely conformed for purposes of ambition!

Equally under Northumberland as under Somerset, the policy of the Government was intolerance of nonconformity, and persecution, combined with the insatiable lust for plunder and corruption. No sooner was Northumberland firmly seated in power, than he set machinery at work to collect any property of the Church that remained capable of appropriation. Zeal against superstition, was the universal pretext for the pillage of the Churches. "In the business of plunder, the rapacity of the Crown officials," says Froude, "had been distanced hitherto by private speculation. The halls of country houses were hung with altar cloths; tables and beds were quilted with copes; the knights and squires drank their claret out of chalices, and watered their horses in marble coffins."

¹⁵ Froude's Eng., v. 358.

Not only were the shrines and crucifixes rifled, but all the Church plate had been ordered into the Treasury. It was even ordered that the gold, silver, and jewels with which the Mass books, legend books, and such like, were ornamented in the King's library at Westminster, should be stripped off, and sent to the Treasury! "The churches," says Strype, "the lead having been torn from the roofs, crumbled into ruins. Parishes were left without incumbents, or provided with curates who were incapable or useless. A thousand pulpits in England were covered with dust."¹⁶

Yet it was suspected that much valuable property remained concealed, and Northumberland issued several commissions to hunt it out. There was a special commission to collect *bells, vestments, and ornaments*. Two commissions for *jewels and plate*; another to search *private houses* for church property, and, should any such be found, to make further profit by fining the offender. Other commissions were appointed to examine into the *rents of the Crown estates, and to sell what remained of the Chantry lands*, while the Bishopric of Worcester was suppressed, and its rich endowments sold! The See of Durham was also suppressed!—and the vast estates attached to it Northumberland secured for himself by a grant under the Great Seal, which he made the young King sign!

St. Paul's, London, was stripped and gutted; the *organ* was removed and sold. The *altars, chapels, marble tombs*, and "*all the goodly stone-work that stood behind the high altar*," was taken away, and turned into money! *This was the fate of all the other churches in the city and throughout the country—all were similarly visited and gutted.* Strype relates how the woods on the lands of the See of London were cut down and sold. The See of Gloucester was suppressed, and the lands divided among the Northumberland faction!

Burnet is lavish in praise of Edward's personal character far

¹⁶ Memorials of the Reformation.

beyond what contemporary evidence warrants. He says, however, that his "untimely end was looked on by all people as a just judgment of God upon them who pretended to love and promote a Reformation, but *whose impious and flagitious lives were a reproach to it*. The open lewdness in which many lived, without shame or remorse, gave great occasion to their adversaries to say they were in the right to assert justification by faith without works ; *since they were, as to every good work, reprobate*.

"Their gross and insatiable scrambling after the goods and wealth that had been dedicated with good designs, though to superstitious uses, without applying any part of it to promoting the gospel, the instructing the youth, and relieving the poor, made all people conclude that *it was for robbery, and not for a Reformation*, that their zeal made them so active.

"The irregular and immoral lives of many of the professors of the gospel, gave their enemies great advantages to say they ran away from confession, penance, fasting, and prayers, only that they might be under no restraint, but *indulge themselves in a licentious and dissolute course of life*.

"By these things, that were but too visible in some of the more eminent among them, the people were much alienated from them : and as much as they were formerly prejudiced against Popery, they grew to have kinder thoughts of it, and to look on all changes that had been made, *as designs to enrich some vicious courtiers*, and to let in an inundation of vice and wickedness upon the nation. Some of the clergy that promoted the Reformation, were not without very visible blemishes : some indiscretions both in their marriages and in their behaviour, contributed not a little to raise a general aversion to them.

"It is true there were great and shining lights among them, whose exemplary deportment, continual labours, fervent charity, and constant zeal, both during their lives and at their

deaths, kept up the credit of that work, as much as it was disgraced by others : *but they were few in comparison of the many bad.*"¹⁷

The total value of the land that passed from the Crown in this reign, as estimated by Froude, shows to what an enormous extent the plunder of church and public property was carried. After making liberal deductions on all imaginable grounds—after reasonable allowances for grants legitimately made as a reward for services, there will remain, on a computation most favourable to the Council, estates worth about *five millions sterling in our currency, which the Ministers of Edward's minority, with their friends, had appropriated*—"I suppose," says Froude, "*I must not say stolen—and divided among themselves !*"

The shameless depravity of the nobility and leading men under the Tudors—and, indeed, since then, until a wholesome public opinion began to operate in the present century—is almost incredible. But with respect to the plundering and peculation of the leaders in the Reformation they stand alone, unparalled for their astounding hypocrisy, and profound profligacy. Of all pretexts for vice, the most disgusting is a profession of regard for religion.

Thus, under the pretext of purifying the libraries of the Foundations and Universities of superstitious books, many were shamefully annihilated, or *a particular desire was manifested for the silver clasps and ornaments of the binding*!—*Von Raumer's Political Hist., &c., i. 70.*

The books were used to clean candlesticks, wipe boots, &c., and in this way many works of rare value were destroyed. A worse than Turkish barbarity presided over the spoliation of monasteries, the pillage of churches, and the general destruction of Church chattels.—*Soames' Hist. of the Reform., ii. 283.*

¹⁷ Hist. Reform., p. iii. b. 4.

Respecting the spoliators in Edward's reign the same author states that, "notwithstanding the sequestration of the estates of the monasteries and enormously large receipts, so much had been given and squandered away, nay, the King was so repeatedly cheated and robbed by his first barons, that he was forced to sell crown lands, and yet to borrow money at home and abroad, on the most ruinous terms, even at 14 per cent., and often to receive goods instead of money."—*Ibid.*, i. 75.

The rapacious courtiers of England were not content with the spoil of the Church property, they desired to seize the revenues that remained. "Almost every bishopric," says Hallam, "was spoiled by their ravenous power in this reign, either through mere alienations, or long leases, or unequal exchanges."

Turner says of the council of Edward, that "the lay lords especially, were more earnest chiefly to dispossess the Church of what property and possessions remained to it, and to share among themselves such booty as could be wrested from the unbefriended hierarchy."—*Modern Hist. of Eng.*, part second, p. 142.

The ignorance of the clergy in those days was something marvellous. Some could manage to say the Paternoster in barbarous Latin, but were unable to do so in English. Only a few could repeat the Ten Commandments, yet they were far more than observed them. Few could prove the Articles of Faith by Scripture; that was out of their way, and why, indeed, should they encumber their minds with useless learning, for surely where Articles of Faith are dogma—imposed by authority and not resting on reason, it is a work of supererogation to reason about them.—*Nare's Burghley*, vol. i. p. 340.

The condition of religious instruction among the people may be judged from the fact, that the patron of a benefice no

longer considered it necessary to make a distinction between a clergyman and a layman. In making an appointment, he did not trouble himself about the personal fitness of his nominee. The learned Bucer, Professor of Divinity in Oxford, in a letter to Bishop Hooper, says, that a patron may present himself to a vacant living, and thus retain the emoluments, or "*he presented his steward, his huntsman, or his gamekeeper.*" In a letter to Calvin he says—"There is little true religion in England. The Bishops were snarling about their doctrines, the Lords were appropriating the Church estates and plate, and in their hearts cared nothing for the Reformation at all ; clergymen professing to be Evangelicals held four or five livings and officiated in none. Of the vital parts of religion no one thought at all."

Thus, observes Froude, "*the men who governed England in the minority of Edward VI., succeeded in making themselves individually execrated, and in bringing disgrace on the cause of which they were the professed defenders.* All over the country discontent—social, political, and religious—was steadily on the increase. Any opposition to the arbitrary proclamations emanating from the Council was considered to indicate a conspiracy against the State, and persons were constantly being put to death by martial law on the merest suspicion." Roman Catholics who would not relinquish the Mass, with Protestants who would not conform to the religion of the Council and Parliament, filled the prisons of the country to overflowing, while ordinary punishment consisted in slitting or cropping the ears, and in the public disgrace of the pillory !

Edward died July 6, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign, which was fraught with calamity to every interest in the country. Judged by its results, the Reformation—as far as it had yet proceeded—had been productive of very little indeed but evil. In the minds of the great body of the people, the change in religion thrust upon

them was associated with the severe distress and oppression which kept the country in a state of impending insurrection. While the principles of the Reformation were cherished in the hearts of only a very few sincere and thoughtful believers.

CHAPTER IV.

On the Reaction under Queen Mary.—1553–1558.

THE time was now at hand when “the bloody instructions” taught by the Reformers of Edward’s reign, were to return and plague the inventors! [The Crown to which Mary succeeded, had been rendered absolute in religious matters by them, and a policy of persecution for nonconformity inaugurated, which is to be traced through subsequent history by the bloodshed and havoc it caused. Bigots who never see but one side of a question, conveniently shut their eyes to these facts, and represent Mary as a monstrous exception to the brother who preceded and the sister who succeeded her; whereas the only substantial and really important difference between them consisted, not so much in the means they respectively employed, as in the ends they sought to accomplish. They all cherished the same principles of arbitrary government, coerced conscience by penal laws, and dabbled in the blood of persecution—but for a different purpose.

The crowning iniquity of Northumberland’s wicked career, was the attempt to set aside the succession to the throne as settled by Parliament. Under the pretence of securing the progress of the Reformation, he had induced the dying Edward to assume a power he did not possess, and make a will, depriving his sister Mary of her right, and leaving the Crown to Lady Jane Grey. To this innocent victim of his criminal ambition he had married his fourth son, and on the death of Edward, July 6, 1553, she was acknowledged Queen by the subservient Council, and proclaimed in London.

On being apprised of these proceedings Mary fled to Framlingham Castle, near the Suffolk coast, and Burnet relates—"The Lady Jane was proclaimed in many towns near London, yet the people were generally running to Queen Mary: many from Norfolk came to her, and a great body of Suffolk men gathered about her, who were all for the Reformation. They desired to know of her, whether she would alter the religion set up in King Edward's days; to whom she gave full assurances, that she would never make any innovation or change, but be contented with the private exercise of her own religion. Upon this they were all possessed with such a belief of her sincerity, that it made them resolved to hazard their lives and estates in her quarrel."¹

When subsequently reminded of this promise, she declared those who took the liberty were insolent—"that they being members, thought to rule her that was their head, but she would soon teach them that members ought to obey the head, and not attempt to bear rule over it." By way of enforcing this rebuke, and as an example, one of the ex-postulants was ordered to stand three days in the pillory, as having said that which tended to the defamation of the Queen!

Northumberland and his faction, corrupt and rapacious, and detested by the nation, were incapable of sustaining their designs by force of arms. "Had the Reformation been, as he pretended, the true concern of the Duke of Northumberland, he would," as Froude observes, "have brought Mary back himself, bound by conditions which, in her present danger, she would have accepted. But Northumberland cared as little for religion as for any other good thing. He was a great criminal throwing a stake for a crown."² The right of Mary to the throne was acknowledged by the nation, and the people everywhere declared in her favour, so that the conspirators

¹ Hist. Reform., part ii. b. 2.² Hist. of Eng., vi. 15.

were compelled to surrender at discretion, and civil war was averted.³

Having ascended the throne under such favourable circumstances, had Mary only followed moderate counsels she could have restored the Roman Catholic religion with the consent of the great body of the people, and have left her name free from the sanguinary epithet that will for ever cling to it. So far "*the effects of the reformation in England had been chiefly visible in the outward dominion of scoundrels, and in the eclipse of the hereditary virtues of the national character.*"⁴ The new doctrines had taken no genial root in the feelings of the mass of the people, and the restoration of the old worship would have been far more pleasing than otherwise to an overwhelming majority of the population.

The rock upon which Mary split was not in desiring to

³ Turner says—"This plot is usually charged on Northumberland as a scheme for his personal aggrandisement, because one of his sons would be advanced by it; but the State Council, and the King himself, chose to concur in it. *In strict justice it must be deemed a foul conspiracy of the whole administration*, excepting Cranmer, who at first opposed, though he afterwards guiltily acquiesced in it. There is no reason to place the crime solely on Northumberland. It was a nefarious combination of both the King and the Cabinet, without any justifying necessity, and in violation of moral principle, to subvert established law and personal rights."—*Modern Hist. of Eng.*, p. ii. 204.

Strype relates, that when Cranmer was required to sign the deed altering the succession he refused, and "answered that he might not without perjury, for so much as he was before sworn to my Lady Mary by King Henry's will." To whom the Council answered—"That they had consciences as well as he, and were also as well sworn to the King's will as he was." The Archbishop answered—"I am not judge over any man's conscience, but mine own only."—*Life of Cranmer*, p. 425. Yet he signed!

The news of Edward's death, of Jane's failure, and of Mary's rapid establishment had been transmitted from France to the Pope. It was so unexpected, and so complete, and promised such personal benefits to himself and to his See, that he burst into tears of joy. The Pope in one of his letters styles Edward "the youth who was called King of England!"

⁴ Froude, vi. 6.

restore Roman Catholicism, as a religious creed and mode of worship which people could freely follow if they pleased, for in doing this there was no difficulty to be apprehended, nor in reality did she experience any in going much further; but *she ruined the cause she championed by attempting to re-establish the Papal authority in the plenitude it enjoyed during the dark ages.*

In this she had not the sympathy of the Roman Catholics of England. They would not associate themselves with her in such a policy, which was that of Ultramontane Papistry, and alien to their feelings. The infatuated bigotry and intense superstition of the Queen made her desire to see the Papal authority what it was when King John grovelled in penitential supplication before Langton, and degraded the sovereignty of England by swearing fealty to the Pope, and doing homage for his dominions as a vassal to his superior lord! But no section of the people shared such views in Mary's day.

Then, as now, the Ultramontane faction in England was composed of a few insignificant zealots, whose fanaticism, devoid of intelligence, unreasoning and unpatriotic, made them the blind and bigoted slaves of the Papacy. But while "three quarters of the English people were Catholics; that is, they were attached to the hereditary and traditional doctrines of the Church; they detested as cordially as the Protestants, the interference of a foreign power, whether secular or spiritual, with English liberty."⁵ In other words the English people were *Roman Catholics, but not Papists*—a most essential distinction, which is as pregnant with meaning to-day as it was three hundred years ago. They had no affection for the Papacy in an Ultramontane sense. "They did not," says Froude, "wish for the re-establishment of the religious orders, or the odious domination of the clergy. But the numerical majority among them did desire a celibate

⁵ Froude, vi. 39.

priesthood, the ceremonies which the custom of centuries had sanctified, and the ancient faith of their fathers as reformed by Henry VIII."

It was fatal to the realization of the Queen's designs that the re-establishment of the religious orders, and of the Papal authority, would have involved the restoration of the Church lands and of all the plundered property. This had now become an impossibility. "The council, the peers, the commons, the entire lay voices of England, liberal and conservative alike, were opposed to Rome; Gardiner was the only statesman in the country who thought a return to Catholic Union practicable or desirable; while there was scarcely an influential family, titled or untitled, which was not by grant or purchase, in possession of confiscated Church property."⁶

This, as Lingard admits, rendered the realization of the full designs of the court and reactionists impracticable.—"It was said and believed, that the restoration of ecclesiastical property was essentially connected with the recognition of the Papal authority. If the spoils of the Church had been at first confined to a few favourites and purchasers, they were now become, by sales and bequests, divided and sub-divided among thousands; and almost every family of opulence in the kingdom had reason to deprecate a measure which, according to the general opinion, would induce the compulsive surrender of the whole, or part of its possessions."⁷

But from the very first the unhappy Queen misunderstood the feeling of the country. She commenced her reign with a fixed resolve in her own mind not only to restore the religion of Rome, but also to re-establish the odious Papal authority, in all the plenitude of its pretensions to supremacy in spirituals and temporals: and this is what frustrated all the unscrupulous efforts of her reign, and made its memory infamous to posterity.

⁶ Froude, vi. 93.

⁷ Hist. Eng., vii. 189

She affected at the first meeting of her Council a studied moderation, as if she did not contemplate intolerance, and had no design to re-kindle the flames of persecution. She declared "that, although her own conscience was staid in matters of religion, yet she was resolved not to compel or strain others, otherwise than as God should put into their hearts a persuasion of that truth she was in, and this, she hoped, should be done by the opening His Word to them by godly, virtuous, and learned preachers."⁸

A few days after having made this declaration, she issued a proclamation—"That she, considering the great danger that had come to the realm, by the differences in religion, did declare, for herself, that she was of that religion that she had professed from her infancy, and that she would maintain it during her time, and be glad that all her subjects would charitably receive it, yet she did not intend to compel any of her subjects to it, till *public order should be taken by the common assent.*" In the meantime, among other things, she enjoined, "that none should preach or expound Scripture, or permit any books or plays without her special license."⁹ This was a clear intimation that some interference with the rights of conscience was contemplated.

At this time her confidential adviser was Bishop Gardiner whom she had restored to the see of Winchester, and made Lord Chancellor. He was a very able man, but unprincipled, and as thoroughly unscrupulous as any public man of his age. In craft, cruelty, bigotry, and dissembling, he was indeed a model churchman. He had "fair learning," says Burnet, "but his strength lay in deep dissimulation, a quickness of apprehension, a great prospect of affairs, a close and artificial way of concealing his mind, and insinuating himself into the affections and confidences of other persons." He was without principle, and wholly indifferent as to the means he employed

⁸ Burnet, Reform., p. 11. b. 2.

⁹ Ibid.

to accomplish his ends. He served Henry VIII. in all his measures, favoured him in the divorce contest all through, and declared the marriage with Katherine null and void, notwithstanding the Pope's dispensation, and although the effect was to declare the Princess Mary illegitimate !

He emphatically repudiated Ultramontane opinions, and asserted the kingly prerogative as supreme in ecclesiastical matters above the Pope. He published a work on *True Obedience* to ingratiate himself with Henry, and Bishop Bonner supplied the preface. He not only condemned the marriage with Katherine as "incestuous" and "unlawful," but justified the King's divorcing her, and marrying "his most godly and virtuous wife, Queen Anne !" He conformed to every whim and behest of that capricious tyrant, while during the late reign he suffered five years of arbitrary imprisonment in the Tower, for not proving equally submissive. Released from unjust and harsh imprisonment, he now won Mary's confidence by the force of his character and general compliance with her wishes. He seconded all her views respecting the re-establishment of the Pope's supremacy, and became an infuriated persecutor ; but within two years he was seized with a mortal illness, and rapidly carried off. "He was," says Froude, "vindictive, ruthless, treacherous, but his courage was indomitable. He would have murdered Elizabeth with the forms of law, or without, but Elizabeth was the hope of all that he most detested."

Burnet relates, that as death approached he evinced "great remorse for his former life ;" while Lingard alleges that "during his illness he edified all around him by his piety and resignation." Such are the opposite views of historians.¹⁰

¹⁰ Holinshed relates that, when Gardiner was imprisoned in the Fleet for opposing the Government at the commencement of Edward's reign, the Duchess of Suffolk, in passing the prison, saw him at the window. "Ah ! Bishop," she exclaimed, "*it is merry with the lambs when the wolves are shut up !*"

A matter which influenced the conduct of the Queen, and was regarded by her as of equal solicitude and importance to the restoration of religion, was her marriage with Philip of Spain, which was suggested by the ambitious policy of Charles V. This alliance was very distasteful to the nation, and even Gardiner did not at first favour it ; but the Queen was wilful, and the Emperor, fully aware of her designs concerning religion, used all his influence to restrain violent measures until the marriage was effected. He wanted to use the influence of England in consolidating his own vast empire, and he had always held Papal interests as of very minor moment in comparison with his own. He urged on the Queen the necessity of extreme moderation, and this is why the fires of persecution remained so long smouldering after the Queen ascended the throne.

Gardiner's first duty was to prepare for the assembling of an amenable Parliament ; and as an indication to the public of the changes contemplated, a proclamation was issued, ordering all the foreign Protestant clergymen to leave the country. This was a very cruel and impolitic step. Many of these refugees were eminent for their learning and ability. Some had obtained professorships in the universities, and by their erudition and high qualities had materially contributed to awaken a desire for classical knowledge, and inspire a taste for philosophy and literature.

Bonner, whose "brutality was notorious and unquestionable"—"a bigot and a ruffian," says Froude—was restored to the see of London, and associated with Gardiner and some others in a commission to purify the Episcopal bench, and grant licenses to such clergymen only as they should think qualified to preach.¹¹ This, says Burnet, brought the whole

¹¹ Bonner was like most churchmen of his day, thoroughly unprincipled and quite ready for any sort of work under any sort of master. He was sent as Henry's agent to Rome, to facilitate the divorce, and conducted

clergy of the country at once under control, and placed them at the mercy of the Crown. But this commission was strictly within the prerogative of the Crown, according to Protestant precedent as established in the late reign. Cranmer and all the Protestant Bishops had accepted their offices under the supreme "headship" of the Crown, to hold virtually during pleasure, and they could not now take exception to "the constitution in Church and State," as it had been framed and unhappily established by themselves.

The Episcopal bench, says Froude, "was wholesomely swept," for many of its occupants were rapacious worldlings—mere traffickers in sacred things, who thought of little else save the accumulation of wealth by the plunder of the Church and the sale of its offices.¹² It was also decided not to recognize the marriage of the clergy, and this harmonized with the

himself so rudely that the Pope threatened him with rather a pleasant sort of death. "The English agents, in their daily interviews with the Pope, were forced to listen to language which it was hard to bear with equanimity. Bonner's tongue was insolent, and under bad control. He replied to menace by impertinence; and on one occasion was so exasperating, that Clement threatened to burn him alive, or boil him in a cauldron of lead."—*Froude's Eng.*, ii. 128; *Burnet*, i. 221.

¹² Holgate, Archbishop of York, may serve as an example of the Apostolic purity and zeal that aided in laying of the foundations of the Protestant State Church of England. Strype says, that when deposed an inventory of the property he had then in his possession was taken, which among other things, included "five houses, three very well provided, two meetly well." At his house at Battersea, London, he had of coined gold £300; plate gilt and parcel gilt 1,600 ounces. Mitre of gold, with two pendants set with very fine diamonds, sapphires and balists, and other stones and pearls, weight 125 ounces; six great gold rings, with very fine sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, turquoises. "At Cawood he had of money £900; mitres two. Plate gilt and parcel gilt 770 ounces; broken cross of silver gilt, 46 ounces. 2,500 sheep. Two Turkey carpets, as big and as good as any subject had; a chest full of copes and vestments. Household stores: wheat, 200 qrs.; malt, 500 qrs.; oats, 60 qrs.; wine 5 or 6 tuns; fish and ling, 6 or 7 hundred; horses at Cawood, 4 or 5 score; harness and artillery sufficient for 7 score men."—*Life of Cranmer*, i. 440.

superstition and prejudices of the nation. It is estimated that there were at that time about 16,000 clergymen in England, of whom, according to Dr. Parker, some 12,000 were deprived for having married. But this is clearly an exaggerated estimate. "Many in England," says Burnet, "seeing the Government was set on severe courses so early, did infer that this would soon grow up to an extreme persecution; so that above a thousand persons fled beyond seas." Among these voluntary exiles were five Bishops and about eight hundred clergymen, besides various noblemen, merchants, artificers, and plebeians, many hundreds. Some fled in disguise, or went over as the servants of foreign Protestants who having come hither for shelter in King Edward's time, were now required to leave the kingdom.¹³

Deeply intent on the reconciliation of the kingdom with Rome, the Queen had solicited the Pope to appoint Cardinal Pole as legate, and at the same time had expressed her anxiety to have the Church at once re-established with all its rights and privileges. She declared her determination to have all the lands, endowments, and other property that had been wrested from the Church restored in full, or ample compensation made, and she believed she was powerful enough by her prerogative to have this effected. She was, however, soon undeceived, for on her Council being made aware of the declaration of her intentions to the Pope, they boldly questioned her on the subject, and as she could neither deny what she had said respecting the Church property, nor explain away her intentions, it was resolved to act with promptitude and decision in resisting any attempt of the kind.

Accordingly, on the meeting of Parliament in October, the Commons came to an instant understanding to gratify the Queen by sanctioning any religious changes she pleased, but it was unanimously determined that *the lay possessors of Church pro-*

¹³ Strype's Cranmer, 314. Burnet's Reform.

perty should not be disturbed in their tenures under any pretext whatever. The Lords were equally explicit and firm, so that the Queen was utterly powerless to compel restitution of the confiscated property, and the tide of reform could not be rolled back in this respect.

To gratify the Queen, Parliament at once repealed all the proceedings concerning her mother's divorce, and then made a clean sweep of all the laws affecting religion that had been passed in Edward's reign. In the Commons the Mass was restored, and the celibacy of the clergy again enjoined by a majority of 350 to 80, and thus, observes Froude—"The precipitation with which Somerset, Cranmer, and Northumberland had attempted to carry out the Reformation, was followed by a natural recoil. Protestant theology had erected itself into a *system of intolerant dogmatism*, and had crowded the gaols with prisoners *who were guilty of no crime but Nonconformity*: it had now to reap the fruits of its injustice, and was suspended till its teachers had grown wiser. The first Parliament of Mary was, indeed, more Protestant, in the best sense of that word, than the statesmen and divines of Edward. While the House of Commons re-established the Catholic services, they decided after long consideration that *no punishment should be inflicted on those who declined to attend those services*. There was to be no Pope, no persecution, no restoration of the Abbey lands—resolutions all of them disagreeable to a reactionary court."

The Queen was highly displeased with Parliament for proving refractory respecting the restoration of the Church property, the Pope's supremacy, and the enforcement of conformity; and she was further offended by an address the Commons presented to her against the "Spanish match"—in objecting to which they faithfully reflected the feelings of the whole nation. She prorogued and then dissolved Parliament, while ambassadors having arrived from the Emperor, negotiations

were entered into and a treaty of marriage concluded in January, 1554. Thereupon an insurrection was unfortunately excited by Sir Thomas Wyatt, and others. Ill-designed, it was worse conducted, and easily suppressed. Its failure greatly facilitated the reactionary policy of the Court, and was taken to afford some justification for the cruel measures adopted.¹⁴

A new Parliament assembled in April, especially for the purpose of sanctioning the marriage of the Queen, and this was soon done. The Emperor had secured the assent of the Council by profuse bribery. The Earls of Pembroke, Arundel, Derby, and Shrewsbury are mentioned as having accepted large pensions for their votes and influence, while gifts of money were freely distributed. Gardiner purchased a majority in the Commons with pensions of £100 and £200 a year, while the Emperor placed £400,000 sterling at his disposal for purposes of bribery and corruption! This purchase-money of English honour, on its arrival from Spain, was conveyed through the streets of London to the Tower, with "a pomp and circumstance"—an ostentatious parade that bid utter defiance to shame. There were seven-and-twenty chests containing bullion, which were drawn in twenty carts, and there were besides ninety-nine horses and two carts loaded with coined gold and silver. Warner observes—"This is the first instance to be met with in English history of corrupting

¹⁴ "It was a raw, unadvised attempt, and occasioned great mischief to the Protestants, though religion had no share in the conspiracy."—*Neal's Hist. Purit.*, i. 76.

"The abortive insurrection of Sir Thomas Wyatt was the real overthrow of the Reformation in England, as the attempt and its abortion produced to Mary an instantaneous power of deterring or overwhelming all future opposition to her secret project. He had been to her a friend so ardent as to have courageously proclaimed her Queen at Maidstone, before he knew that any others had taken that decided step; but as he was an earnest Protestant, the proposal and progress of the Spanish match united him with those who were apprehensive of its religious consequences."—*Turner's Mod. Hist. of Eng.*, part ii. p. 264.

Parliaments ; but the precedent has been so well followed ever since, that if ever this nation should lose its liberties, and be enslaved and ruined, it will be by means of Parliaments corrupted with bribes and places.¹⁵

At last all difficulties were surmounted ; the marriage was celebrated in July ; and a new Parliament was assembled in November to commence the work of persecution. " Mary," says Lingard, " no longer regarded the murmurs of the discontented. She was assured of the concurrence of the Peers ; and, to lessen the chance of opposition in the Commons, had ordered the sheriffs to recommend to the electors those candidates who were distinguished by their attachment to the ancient faith."¹⁶

In summoning this Parliament, the Queen's title as " Supreme Head of the Church " was, for the first time, omitted from the writs. The great preliminary work was reconciliation with Rome, and a joint address was immediately prepared and presented to the Queen and King by the Lords and Commons, praying that they might be permitted to become reconciled to the See of Rome. The address represented " that whereas they had been guilty of a most horrible defection and schism from the Apostolic See, they did now most sincerely repent of it, and in sign of their repentance were ready to repeal all the laws made in prejudice of that See ; therefore, since the King and Queen had been no way defiled by their schism, they pray them to be intercessors with the Legate to grant them absolution, and to receive them again into the bosom of the Church."

Cardinal Pole was present, as Papal Legate, when this address was presented by both Houses on their knees to the King and Queen, whereupon they graciously interceded with the Cardinal for their pardon. He made a long harangue in granting the request, and ended by imposing as a penance

¹⁵ Ecclesiastical Hist., vol. ii. p. 241.

¹⁶ Hist. of Eng., vii. 242.



Anabaptists to the stake ; in the present they were compelled to suffer the same punishment, which they had so recently inflicted."²⁴ He does, however, give a sort of lukewarm condemnation to the burnings generally, not so much, it would appear, as if he considered them unjustifiable *per se*, and never to be resorted to, as that he deemed them inexpedient and disastrous from the effects they produced ; for, instead of suppressing the Reformation, they mainly contributed to its progress and permanence !²⁵

Of the prisoners sent before the Prelates, while many recanted in the presence of death, Lingard admits that "many also refused to listen to their exhortations, and defied their authority." Conviction followed conviction ; and the fate of one victim served only to encourage others to imitate his constancy.²⁶ Thus, every death made a more profound and durable impression on the popular mind than would have followed from sermons and homilies by the tens of thousands in favour of Protestantism. It was the calm fortitude, the heroic bearing, the cheerful acceptance of a terrible fate by three hundred martyrs at the stake, during this bloody reign, that uprooted the Papal system from the feelings of the English people, and rendered its complete overthrow inevitable.

Early in 1557 a new Special Commission was appointed, for the purpose of searching out the sellers of heretical books, or those who professed or taught heresy, or who refused to attend mass, to walk in religious processions, to use holy water, or who in any way manifested disrespect for the estab-

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lished religion. The Commissioners had the most ample powers to institute inquiries, at their pleasure, into the conduct and opinions of every man and woman in all parts of the kingdom. The protection of the law was suspended. The Commissioners might arrest any person at any place ; and mayors, sheriffs, and magistrates were commanded to assist at their peril. They could punish by fine and imprisonment whom they pleased, while the contumacious were to be handed over to their ordinary to be punished according to law. " No Spanish Inquisition," says Froude, " possessed larger or less tolerable powers ; no English sovereign ever more entirely set aside the restrictions of the law."

Another Commission of Bishops was sent to the Universities, with powers extending not only to the living, but over the poor remains of the dead also. Two foreign Protestants of eminent abilities had filled Chairs at Cambridge, and when they died were buried—Bucer in St. Mary's Church, and Fagius in St. Michael's. And now a revolting exhibition took place, in which ferocious bigotry and diabolical ingenuity struggled with an impotent rage—which infuriated churchmen alone seem capable of manifesting—to heap dishonour on the ashes of these learned and virtuous men, whose only crime consisted in dissenting from irrational dogmas.

The two churches were laid under interdict, as defiled by heretical bodies ! The childish forms were ridiculously observed of fixing summonses on their doors, citing Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius, or any one on their behalf, to appear and make answer on an accusation of heresy. As if in expectation of an appearance, the Court of Bishops solemnly sat ; but as no one did appear, the charge of heresy was taken as proved, and sentence pronounced in due form that the bodies should be disinterred and burnt ! To grace this posthumous *Auto-da-fe*, a strict search through all the Colleges collected a vast number of Bibles, Prayer-books, Protestant

the immediate repeal of all the laws passed against the Papal supremacy since the 20th Henry VIII., which they promised to perform, and then he granted them a full absolution, which they dutifully acknowledged on their knees !

This happy event was celebrated with great pomp, gorgeous ceremonies, numberless processions, sermons, masses, and *Te Deums*; but after all it was a solemn farce, and P'apal supremacy practically existed only in name as an ornamental mockery. True, a comprehensive repealing Act was at once carried, and it was declared that the title of "Supreme Head" never of right belonged to the Crown. Another Act was passed renewing all the statutes against heretics enacted during the reigns of Richard II., Henry IV., and Henry V. A new law of treason was also framed, and another against seditious words, and so far everything was in readiness to open a campaign of persecution and blood. All this Parliament was quite willing to do; but this was far short of what the Court desired or the Pope expected.¹⁷

¹⁷ Three ambassadors, a Bishop, a Lord, and a Lawyer, were sent to Rome to thank the Pope for receiving the nation into his bondage, and to take the oath of obedience to him.

In the *Hardwicke State Papers* there is an interesting account of this embassy written by one who accompanied it. On the 10th of June, 1555, they were presented to Paul IV., kissed his foot, which had a crimson velvet slipper, with a cross of silver. He "blessed them, and so they departed sanctified."

On the 12th, they went to the Pope's Chamber of Presence, and saw him go to evensong "in a chair of crimson velvet wrought with gold, and two servants going before him, crying—Abasso ! abasso ! which is to say, Kneel down."

On the 13th, when he went to mass at St. Peter's, "two triple crowns were borne before him of an inestimable value," and two men preceding "with great broad fans made of peacock's tails, to keep the sun and flies from his holy face."

Yet the writer, with all his veneration, adds "*he saw a world of relics, very ridiculous and incredible.*" This was the last embassy that went from England to pay public homage to Rome.—*Hardwicke State Papers*, vol. i. p. 97-99.

The Papal and Court factions demanded a substantial restoration of the Pope's supremacy and of the Church's rights. This involved the repeal of the statute of Mortmain, the abolition of lay impropriations, the restoration of Church property, the re-establishment of Bishops' Courts, the exercise of legislative functions by Convocation, the exemption of the clergy from the authority of secular magistrates, the punishment of heretics, and the destruction of English Bibles, Prayer-books, &c. These demands were sustained by Pole, Gardiner, and the purely Papistical element in the Council and Parliament; but the Roman Catholic laity as a body were decidedly hostile, and they had the majority.

The lawyers in Parliament declared that "the English clergy, regular and secular, had held their estates from immemorial time under the English crown, and it was not for any spiritual authority, domestic or foreign, to decide whether an English King and an English Parliament might interfere to alter the disposition of these estates." Parliament would not give way by any concession that might even indirectly affect the tenure of the confiscated church property, but they allowed the re-establishment of the Bishops' Courts, with power of arbitrary arrest and discretionary punishment, which placed the liberty and property of every man suspected of heresy at their mercy.

At this time, when all these great events were taking place, the Queen announced her pregnancy, and *Te Deums* were sung in all the churches of London. It was determined, in the hope of propitiating divine favour, to evince befitting zeal in vindicating the majesty of God against the enemies of His church. Accordingly in January, 1555, a solemn procession through London, to thank God for reconciling them to His church, took place; after which, on the 4th of February, the fires of Smithfield were kindled, and, extending into every part of the country, the ravages of persecution became fearful.

Numbers fled the country ; some recanted and were spared ; others concealed themselves, and many escaped by remaining quiet. Such was the favour of Heaven bespoken for the expected birth !

But after the burning of the first batch of victims popular feeling took an unexpected turn. The people had been persuaded that the Protestant heretics had no sincerity of religious feeling—that “their faith could not and would not stand the ordeal of fire ;” but when they observed the becoming demeanour, the heroic constancy, the invincible spirit with which the martyrs suffered—with which they endured the protracted agonies of the most horrible of deaths, a total change of feeling followed, their minds were excited to admiration, and persecutions that were wickedly designed to re-establish the Papal system on the ruins of English liberty, contributed most materially to its final overthrow amid the rejoicings of the nation.

The kindling of these Smithfield fires also caused serious differences and fierce disputes in the Queen's Council, and at Court. The imperial ambassador impressed on Philip that such fiery zeal on the part of Pole and Gardiner would defeat all his plans, and that moderation was essential to success. Philip desired to obtain the Regency of the kingdom, and to be crowned King, with full regal power during the minority of any heir to the throne ; but hateful as he generally was to the English people, the belief that he instigated the burnings, rendered him more so, and though he fully approved of them, he dissembled so well as to make his chaplain preach a sermon at Court condemning their cruelty and censuring their policy.

The wretched Queen no doubt believed that the sweetest incense she could offer to God was the fumes of roasting heretics. Froude charitably believes, with some show of reason, that about the time of her marriage, July, 1554, her mind had become seriously affected, and that she was liable to morbid

mental depression of varying severity during the remainder of her miserable life. He considers that the trials of the six months preceding her marriage had begun to tell on her understanding. "The unhappy Queen," he says, "unloved and unloveable, yet with her parched heart thirsting for affection ; was flinging herself upon a breast to which an iceberg was warm ; upon a man to whom love was an unmeaning word, except as the most brutal of passions. For a few months she created for herself an atmosphere of unreality. She saw in Philip the ideal of her imagination, and in Philip's feelings the reflex of her own ; but the dream passed away—her love for her husband remained only to be a torture to her."¹⁸ With a broken spirit and a bewildered understanding, she turned to Heaven for comfort ; but she believed that Heaven frowned upon her, because of the national sin against the Church, and of the land still being infected with heresy.

For a brief and torturing space, however, it appeared to the perturbed and hysterical imagination of the Queen that Heaven was, at last, about to smile propitious. In April, 1555, every preparation was made for the expected birth that was to realize all her hopes. "The Queen," says Froude, "withdrew to Hampton Court for entire quiet. The rockers and the nurses were in readiness, and a cradle stood open to receive the royal infant. Priests and bishops sang litanies through the London streets ; a procession of ecclesiastics in cloth of gold and tissue, marched round Hampton Court Palace, headed by Philip in person, Gardiner walked by his side, while Mary gazed from a window. Not only was the child assuredly coming, but its sex was decided on, and circulars were drawn up and signed both by the King and Queen,

¹⁸ "Philip was gross alike in all his appetites ; bacon fat was the favourite food with which he gorged himself to illness ; his intrigues were on the same level of indelicacy, and his unhappy wife was forced to know that he preferred the society of abandoned women of the lowest class to hers."—*Froude*, vi. 368.

with blanks only for the month and day, announcing to ministers of State, ambassadors, and to foreign sovereigns, the birth of a Prince."

But the morbid imaginings which so excited hope and stimulated prayer, as time rolled on, became tintured with reluctant and painful misgivings, until the cherished delusion could be no longer harboured, and it passed away like an agonising dream, leaving the mind bewildered and the heart chill. Assuredly Heaven was offended, and what can atone for offence but sacrifice? More burnt-offerings must, therefore, ascend to Heaven. The fires that for a space smouldered, must again be fanned by holy zeal, to burst forth with crackling and consuming flame, lapping the limbs of heretical victims, that so the God of Christian Churches—a God of mercy and of love, and not a heathen deity—may be propitiated!

So inspired, the King and Queen addressed themselves to Bonner, Bishop of London, whose duty and delight it was to preside over the "*acts of faith*" in the metropolis. They sent him a joint letter—"Given under our signet, at our honour of Hampton Court, the 24th of May, in the first and second years of our reign," in which they exhort him to a vigorous execution of the law against "such as forgetting their duties to Almighty God, *and us*, do lean to any erroneous and heretical opinions." They learn, they say, "to our no little marvel," that the severity of the laws has been relaxed, and therefore "admonish" him to have all who remain obstinate in error dealt with "according to the order of the laws, so as through your good furtherance, both God's Glory may be the better advanced, and the commonwealth the more quietly governed."¹⁹

¹⁹ Burnet's Hist. Refor. in Records, p. ii. b. 2, No. 20.

Philip's character is well illustrated by the fact, that to impose on the English people and gain a reputation for clemency, he made his confessor,

Thus stimulated by the direct and earnest injunctions of the King and Queen, persecution broke out with renewed fierceness. "Reason, humanity, even common prudence, were cast to the winds," and the seed of reformation was well watered with the blood of martyrs. The whole of the following year, 1556, was one continued persecution—"In which," says Neal, "Popery triumphed in all its false and bloody colours. Bonner, not content to burn heretics singly, sent them by companies to the flames. Such as were suspected of heresy were examined upon the articles of the corporeal presence of Christ in the sacrament, auricular confession, and the Mass; and if they did not make satisfactory answers, they were without any further proof condemned to the fire. Women were not spared, nor infants in the womb."²⁰

But the blindest blunder the persecutors committed was in sending Cranmer to the stake. Ridley and Latimer had endured the horrible treatment of a lingering death, having been slowly roasted alive, and Cranmer having witnessed their sufferings his own fortitude gave way. To save his life he made several recantations, and subscribed anything that was required; but after remaining in prison for some months, feelings of revenge prevailed over politic considerations of mercy, and he was brought out to suffer, in the hope that he would make a public recantation at the stake. But all the errors of his life—the crimes of his policy and the weakness of his nature—

Alphonsus à Castro, a Spanish Friar, preach a sermon before him in London, on the 10th of the previous February—the day after Bishop Hooper's martyrdom—strongly reprobating the taking away of people's lives for religion; and in plain terms, says Strype, inveighed against the Bishops for doing it. He said they had not learned it in Scripture, which taught bishops in the spirit of meekness to instruct those that opposed them; and not to burn them for their consciences. Yet here we have Philip on the 24th of May following, reprehending Bonner for flagging in his bloody work!—*Eccles. Memorials*, iii. 209.

²⁰ Hist. Purit., i. 87.

were nobly atoned, so far as such could be done, by the resplendent example of his illustrious death.

"He was brought out," says Froude, "with the eyes of the soul blinded to make sport for his enemies, and in his death he brought down upon them a wilder destruction than he had effected by his teaching while alive. Pole was appointed the next day to the see of Canterbury: but in other respects the Court had overreached themselves by their cruelty. Had they been contented to accept the recantation, they would have left the Archbishop to have died broken-hearted, pointed at by the finger of scorn; and the Reformation would have been disgraced in its champion. They were tempted by an evil spirit of revenge, into an act unsanctioned even by their own bloody laws; and they gave him an opportunity of redeeming his fame, and of writing his name on the roll of martyrs."²¹

With respect to the various recantations he had made from a wish to save his life, he said—"I renounce and refuse them, as things written with my hand, contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart; and written for fear of death, and to save my life, if it might be."²² "Remember yourself, and play the Christian," was shouted to him. "I do," he replied; "it is now too late to dissemble. I must now speak the truth." He declared that "as his hand had offended by writing contrary to his heart, it should be the first to receive its punishment." And when the fire was kindled, he thrust his right hand into the flame, saying—"This hath offended," and there held it till the flames ascended above his head!²³

Lingard, who evidently desires to draw a veil over this dark period, has no other remark to offer on the murder of Cranmer, than that as he had, with Ridley and Latimer, "during the preceding reign, concurred in sending the

²¹ Eng., vi. 430.

²² Strype's Memorials, iii. 237.

²³ Strype's Cranmer, 384.

Anabaptists to the stake ; in the present they were compelled to suffer the same punishment, which they had so recently inflicted."²⁴ He does, however, give a sort of lukewarm condemnation to the burnings generally, not so much, it would appear, as if he considered them unjustifiable *per se*, and never to be resorted to, as that he deemed them inexpedient and disastrous from the effects they produced ; for, instead of suppressing the Reformation, they mainly contributed to its progress and permanence !²⁵

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lished religion. The Commissioners had the most ample powers to institute inquiries, at their pleasure, into the conduct and opinions of every man and woman in all parts of the kingdom. The protection of the law was suspended. The Commissioners might arrest any person at any place ; and mayors, sheriffs, and magistrates were commanded to assist at their peril. They could punish by fine and imprisonment whom they pleased, while the contumacious were to be handed over to their ordinary to be punished according to law. "No Spanish Inquisition," says Froude, "possessed larger or less tolerable powers ; no English sovereign ever more entirely set aside the restrictions of the law."

Another Commission of Bishops was sent to the Universities, with powers extending not only to the living, but over the poor remains of the dead also. Two foreign Protestants of eminent abilities had filled Chairs at Cambridge, and when they died were buried—Bucer in St. Mary's Church, and Fagius in St. Michael's. And now a revolting exhibition took place, in which ferocious bigotry and diabolical ingenuity struggled with an impotent rage—which infuriated churchmen alone seem capable of manifesting—to heap dishonour on the ashes of these learned and virtuous men, whose only crime consisted in dissenting from irrational dogmas.

The two churches were laid under interdict, as defiled by heretical bodies ! The childish forms were ridiculously observed of fixing summonses on their doors, citing Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius, or any one on their behalf, to appear and make answer on an accusation of heresy. As if in expectation of an appearance, the Court of Bishops solemnly sat ; but as no one did appear, the charge of heresy was taken as proved, and sentence pronounced in due form that the bodies should be disinterred and burnt ! To grace this posthumous *Auto-da-fe*, a strict search through all the Colleges collected a vast number of Bibles, Prayer-books, Protestant

primers, and interdicted works of various kinds, and on the 6th of February, 1557, the coffins were taken out of their graves, and chained to a stake in the market-place of Cambridge; the Bibles and other books were heaped up around them with a quantity of faggots, and bodies and books—a huge pile—were reduced to ashes!²⁷

After this brave exploit—this true churchman's triumph of malignity and folly—the persecution waxed fiercer, and if possible raged through the country with redoubled fury. The Protestants must be destroyed. They were, as Cardinal Pole declared, *brambles and briars only fit to be burnt!*—criminals worse than thieves, or murderers, or adulterers, and God could never be expected to favour the nation while such were harboured and permitted to live in it! Nor had all the bloody sacrifices propitiated Heaven!—there was famine throughout the land, and terrible sickness prevailed. Discontent was universal. At home every interest suffered save the sacerdotal, and abroad the loss of Calais, the disgrace of an imbecile policy and of continuous defeat tarnished the repute of the country.

In January, 1558, amid the gloom and despondency that overwhelmed the nation, Parliament assembled to make provision for the safety of the realm. Philip proposed to undertake an expedition for the recovery of Calais, but the Council did not recommend it, nor would the Commons sanction any expenditure beyond what was necessary to put the nation in a state of defence by land and sea, and, after a short session of six weeks, Parliament was prorogued.

About this time the Queen, again deceived by the symptoms

²⁷ The whole process of this solemn absurdity is detailed by Fox, p. 1774—82. The effect was so ludicrous, that the very country boors laughed, while they abhorred, at hearing dead men cited to answer for their heresy, and at seeing the Romish officials carrying out the dug up bones to burn them in the public market-place.

of her disease, believed herself *enceinte*, and announced it to her husband, who was in the Netherlands. The delusion was cherished for a few months, and provided the clergy with employment in processions, and spectacles, and prayers, to obtain the favour of Heaven. But again disappointed hope was the result; and again the moody mind of the Queen, warped by superstition, gave way to intense fanaticism, and fancied that Heaven was not auspicious, because heresy still existed. Fresh and urgent orders were given to recommence the burnings, which had been suspended previous to the assembling of Parliament, for "the Bishops," says Burnet, "when Parliament was sitting, did always intermit their cruelties," and persecution soon raged again in every quarter of the country.

Whole detachments of men and women were again slaughtered in London, and the horrible sight of these burnings worked upon the beholders, says Froude, as it has worked since, and will work while the English nation survives. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed among the people on behalf of the sufferers. Great multitudes assembled and cheered them on their way to death, and they received ovations at the stake.

The Queen, exasperated at the determination with which the populace bestowed their sympathy on the martyrs, had the folly to issue a proclamation forbidding the people to approach, touch, speak to, or comfort heretics on their way to execution, under the penalty of death! Shortly after this proclamation had appeared—which, remarks Burnet, "was thought a strain of barbarity beyond all the examples of former times, to deprive dying men of the good wishes and prayers of their friends"—no less than thirteen Protestants were brought before Bonner, having been detected at a prayer meeting, and he ordered seven to be burnt together in one batch at Smithfield.

On this occasion the people, as Strype relates, replied to the Queen's ferocious proclamation by crowding about the stake with passionate demonstrations of sympathy and affection. Thomas Bentham, a great friend of the reformers, when the faggots were kindled, stood out in the presence of the multitude and cried—"We know that they are the people of God, and therefore we cannot choose but wish well to them. God Almighty for Christ's sake, strengthen them." The multitude shouted in reply, "Amen! Amen!"

Alarmed at this defiant display of feeling, Bonner was afraid to burn publicly the remaining six. He took them to his own house at Fulham, tried them privately, and had them burnt at Brentford during the night. "This act purchased him more hatred," says Fox, the martyrologist, "than any that he had done of the common people."

And now Mary's days were numbered, the end was at hand, yet as the gloom of approaching death overshadowed her mind, her horrible lust for blood knew no abatement. "The people, sick to their very souls at the abominable spectacles which were thrust before them, sank," says Froude, "into a sullen despondency." "Here was nothing," said Sir Thomas Smith, "but firing, hanging, quartering, and burning, taxing and levelling. A few priests in white rochets ruled all. In the last two years of Queen Mary's reign, so many of her subjects were made away, what with the execution of the sword and fire, what by sickness, that the third part of the men of England were consumed."²⁸

Mary's last days were tormented with a cankering consciousness of the utter frustration of all her most cherished aims, in addition to which she had the painful conviction of being thoroughly detested by the great bulk of the people. The evidences of the imprecations showered upon her could not be concealed. Books and pamphlets containing fearful

²⁸ Life by Strype.

invectives, showing the horror inspired by her murderous deeds, and tracing in the ruin and disgrace of the country God's judgment on her rule, beset her path wherever she went, and circulated freely in the Palace. It was in vain that a few months before her death, in the frenzy of passion, she issued a proclamation stating that books filled with heresy, sedition, and treason, were daily brought from beyond the seas, and some covertly printed within the realm, and ordering that "whosoever should be found to have any of the said wicked and seditious books, should be reputed a rebel, *and executed according to martial law!*"

Such Draconic bloodthirstiness shows how severely the Queen's feelings were lacerated; but proclamations are little more than waste paper when they run counter to a predominant national feeling. Suppression, therefore, was impossible, and the circulation of such publications contributed to embitter the closing scenes of a wretched life.

Between Mary, her court, and the Papacy on the one hand, and the lay element of the nation on the other, an irreconcilable antagonism continued to exist during her reign on two prime points of policy—altering the succession, and restoring the Church property. It was fortunate that in the mind of the lay members of the Council, of Parliament, and of the nation, these points were indissolubly associated together, as mutually dependent, and hence there was no wavering about either. Every attempt that was made, directly or indirectly, to alter the succession, and cut off Elizabeth, was resisted with the same iron inflexibility as marked the rejection of all proposals that tended to disturb the tenure by which property was held.

Hence, notwithstanding all her labours and sacrifices, the Queen had bitter experience of the fact that they were all worse than useless. The glowing visions of Catholic unity with which she had beguiled her superstitious fancy, had passed

away, and the hope of leaving a Catholic successor, who would follow in her footsteps, and strive to perfect her work, had also vanished, leaving behind—like the mortifying delusions of her imaginary pregnancies—nothing but a torturing sense of baffled hopes. Her sister, the Princess Elizabeth, whom she had so ardently desired to destroy, the acclamations of the nation would welcome to the throne, and what was more galling to blasted and insulted affection was the fact, that her cold calculating husband had fixed on an alliance with that sister, as likely to serve his ambition.²⁹

Three men and two women were burnt to death by Cardinal Pole at Canterbury, early in November, and they were the last victims sacrificed in this reign—sacrificed, too, when the death agonies were upon the Queen, who expired on the 17th November, 1558, in the 43d year of her age, after an inglorious reign of five years, four months, and eleven days. “As if one star governed both their nativities,” remarks Burnet, “Cardinal Pole was also dying, and he followed within sixteen hours.”

Mary’s reign illustrates another phase of the evils arising from the interference of the Crown in religious matters, which the connection between Church and State necessitates. “An absolute supremacy over the consciences of men, lodged with a single person, may,” as Neal observes, “as well be prejudicial as serviceable to true religion.” No candid writer—no thoughtful, independent mind, judging equitably—can con-

²⁹ Burnet says, “King Philip had once designed to marry her to the Duke of Savoy, when he was in hope of children by the Queen: but that hope vanishing, he broke it off, and intended to reserve her for himself.”—*Hist. Ref.*, p. ii. b. 2. The Queen and Gardiner were both anxious to have her head on the block, but this could not be done without a trial and a conviction, while there was no crime that could be brought home to her. An attempt was made to implicate her in Wyatt’s insurrection, but it signally failed, while it had the effect of putting her friends on their guard by showing how desperately her enemies were bent on her destruction.

demn Mary for giving way to a barbarous spirit of persecution, and, at the same time, honestly profess adherence to the dogmas on which our "constitution in Church and State" was based, and by which it has been maintained.

Justice demands that in condemning Mary we should also condemn the detestable principles of which she was at once the slave and the victim. Her father and brother exercised supreme headship over the Church, and coerced consciences into submission to their will; why, then, should not she follow their example? If it was right for them to behead and burn, by the exercise of their sovereign power, those who would not conform to new-fangled doctrines, how could she consider it wrong to employ the same influences for the purpose of bringing the nation back to old observances and forms of faith? If we allow that the means employed in Edward's reign to overthrow and destroy an ancient system were justifiable, how is it possible to contend that the very same means, when employed by Mary to rebuild and restore, change their nature and become unjustifiable?

The unprejudiced mind will also take into consideration that Mary, in her consistent devotion to the Catholic faith—amid the distracting changes and profligate policy of her time—had no reason to conclude that truth and right were not on her side. She had been educated in the Catholic faith before her father entertained a notion of separating from Rome. She had seen her mother most foully outraged—the victim of cruel injustice, to effect which was the cause of her father's dispute with Rome, resulting in separation, and his assumption of the Headship of the Church in England. How could she believe that reason, or principle, or conscientious conviction had dictated such a change? How could she believe that what was conceived in lustful passion, and matured in blood, was born of God? She saw her father, notwithstanding his crimes, clinging in all things to the Roman

faith, save in the matter of the supremacy—and it was the faith in which her mother sought consolation through all her bitter trials,—how then could she assume it to be erroneous, and open her ears to the new teachings? All the circumstances by which she was surrounded—all the events of her chequered career, of her cheerless youth, of her ripening womanhood, of her maturer years—every incident that contributed to form her mind and develop her character—all had but one general tendency, which was to root her more firmly in the faith of her mother, and impress her with the paramount duty of sustaining it.

What wonder, then, that called to the throne in the thirty-seventh year of her age, with a temper naturally morose, soured by disappointments and irritated by a sense of ill-treatment and injustice, Mary should have exerted the prerogatives of the Crown as arbitrarily in support of what she believed to be her duty, as her father and brother did in support of changes which they deemed it desirable to make? “She was,” as Burnet admits, “a woman of a strict and innocent life, that allowed herself few of the diversions with which courts abound.” And if, as Hume describes her, she was revengeful, cruel, and forgetful of services,—if she possessed few qualities either estimable or amiable,—if she was a weak, bigoted woman under the government of priests,—let it not be forgotten that there was much in her unhappy life to bring out in strong relief the darker shades of character—to pervert natural feeling, deepen the gloom of a constitutional fanaticism, burn into the mind a keen sense of wrong, and inspire ideas of intolerance and revenge.

Turner remarks—“If she had lived half a century earlier, or as much later in our national chronology, she would have added lustre to the English throne, and have obtained a reputation inferior to few of her predecessors. . . . But if ever a sovereign has reigned who has exhibited the deteriorating

and degrading effects of allowing a political priesthood with persecuting principles to take the direction of the State government, and to make the mind of the sovereign subservient to the compulsory imposition on others of the religious system, tenets, and speculations which they choose to maintain, Mary is the person—whose name stands on the rolls of English history, like the pharos on the dark and dangerous rock, to warn every potentate and country, what must be timely discerned and shunned; if honour, fame, happiness, or national prosperity be worthy of a king's pursuit, or desirable for his own gratification to enjoy. . . .

“As far as intellect, love of letters, and patriotism were concerned, the nation lost nothing by her enthronement. It was bigotry and its oppressions which injured her mind and afflicted her people. To the cultivation and private exercise, as she pleased, of her own religious sentiments, she was, like every human being, fully entitled. But by enforcing them on her subjects by dungeons, misery, and fire, she destroyed the effect of her real worth and unusual acquisitions, and darkened her moral character for ever.”—*Mod. Hist. of Eng.*, p. ii. p. 231.

It was natural and becoming that Mary should deeply sympathize with her mother's wrongs and sufferings, yet, because she did so, and because she could not honestly profess approval of all the ecclesiastical changes her father made, she incurred his unmanly resentment, and her life was made so uncomfortable that she was, in a manner, compelled to take refuge in profound dissimulation, and make hypocritical professions, which she detested. Thus, to mollify the anger of her father, she addressed him in this abject strain—“Most humbly prostrate before the feet of your most excellent Majesty, your most humble, faithful, and obedient servant, which hath so extremely offended your most gracious highness, that mine heavy and fearful heart dare not presume to

call you father." After a good deal more in this style, she declared—"As I have, and shall, knowing your excellent learning, virtue, wisdom, and knowledge, put my soul into your direction ; and by the same hath, and will in all things from henceforth direct my conscience ; so my body I do wholly commit to your mercy and fatherly pity," &c.

And in a letter to Cromwell, her father's secretary, containing a full submission to the King's pleasure, in all the points of religion, she said—"For mine opinion touching pilgrimages, purgatory, reliques, and such-like, I assure you I have none at all, but such as I shall receive from him that hath mine whole heart in keeping—that is, the King's most gracious highness, my most benign father, who shall imprint in the same touching these matters, and all other, what his inestimable virtue, high wisdom, and excellent learning shall think convenient, and limit unto me."³⁰

The endurance of such humiliation, as making professions so insincere and positively false, was mortifying enough even to propitiate her father, but it was materially different when, during her brother's reign, she was required to receive a new set of opinions at the insolent dictation of his Council. With a becoming and resolute spirit, she refused to conform to the new creed and worship manufactured and arranged by the Council and Parliament, for which exercise of undoubted right she was treated with unpardonable harshness and severity. She asserted before the Council that "her soul was God's, and her faith she would not change, nor dissemble her opinion with contrary doings." It was said—"I constrained not her faith, but willed her not as a King to rule, but as a subject to obey ; and that her example might breed too much inconvenience."³¹

She was forbidden to have mass celebrated in her own

³⁰ Burnet's Collection, part ii. b. 2, Nos. 3 and 6.

³¹ Journal, Edward VI., March 18, 1550.

house, and her chaplains were arrested and committed to the Tower. The reasons assigned by the Council for such arbitrary proceedings show how crude the notions were that prevailed in those days amongst statesmen and divines concerning the rights of conscience. It was declared "dangerous for a Christian prince to grant liberty that one of his subjects should use a religion against the conscience of the prince!" But such reasoning had to give way before a threat of war; for Mary having appealed to her relative, the Emperor Charles V., for protection, he threatened to declare war if she was not tolerated in the exercise of her religion, and as the country was not prepared for such an alternative, the persecution of the Princess ceased, but the sense of indignity survived, and she neither forgot nor forgave.

While there is no disguising the revolting barbarity of the persecutions which disgraced this reign and steeped its memory in blood, it is only fair that the matters we have referred to should be candidly taken into account in judging the circumstances that powerfully influenced the formation and development of Mary's character. Lingard admits that "the foulest blot on the character of this queen is her long and cruel persecution of the Reformers. The sufferings of the victims naturally begat an antipathy to the woman by whose authority they were inflicted."³²

In his "*Cardinal Pole*" we have an exceedingly discriminating and impartial description given by Ainsworth, of Mary's person, accomplishments and character. "She was," he says, "small of stature, with beautiful hands and feet. Her person was well made, but too thin, and her carriage, though majestic, was exceedingly stiff, and lacked the grace which ease alone can impart. In her younger days she had been accounted good-looking, but she could scarcely be considered so now. Her eyes were large and grey, and her glances keen

³² Hist. Eng., vii. 330.

and steady. Her face was round, her tresses inclining to red, if they did not even actually attain that hue, and the nose too flat and large. Her lips, too, were thin and compressed. Altogether, there was a hardness and severity about her face that destroyed its pleasing character, while premature wrinkles about the eyes and brow gave her age.

"If Mary did not inherit the beauty either of her father or mother, she had many of the qualities by which both were characterized. She had the courage, firmness, and obstinacy of Henry VIII., and she had all the virtues belonging to the unfortunate Katherine of Aragon. Her conduct under the trials to which she was exposed was most exemplary, and even her enemies could find no fault with it. Firmly attached to the principles of the Catholic religion, in which she had been brought up, she never wavered for a moment in her adherence to her faith, but would have suffered martyrdom rather than renounce it. When commanded by the council under Edward VI., to desist from the performance of mass, she still continued to celebrate it in private.

"Mary spoke well in public, and possessed a voice so sonorous that she could be distinctly heard by a large assemblage. Her stirring address to the citizens at Guildhall gave the *coup de grace* to Wyatt's formidable rebellion. She also possessed many accomplishments, playing so well upon the lute and spinet as to astonish and delight professed musicians by her skill. She also greatly excelled in embroidery, and in other female work.

"Her intellectual accomplishments were of a high order, though they did not excite so much astonishment in those days of learned ladies as they would in our own. She spoke French and Spanish perfectly, and read Italian with ease, though she did not speak it. She was also mistress of Latin. At the request of Catherine Parr, she translated into English Erasmus's Paraphrase of the Gospel of St. John.

"Since her accession to the throne, all her time, except the hours of devotion, had been given to affairs of state. She arose at daybreak, performed her religious duties, heard mass, and thenceforward devoted herself to public business, being easy of access to all who desired to approach her. Bigoted Mary was, intolerant and severe towards those who differed with her on points of faith; but she had many redeeming qualities, which should have saved her from the obloquy to which she has been subjected."

But as already observed, Froude, who had no prejudice in her favour, puts forward an hypothesis which is designed to relieve Mary's memory from much of the odium that has overwhelmed it. He considers that "the collapse of the inflated imaginations which had surrounded her supposed pregnancy"—the revulsion of feeling caused by Philip's heartless conduct—and the hysterical affections to which she was subject, combined with the crosses and vexations of government, had disturbed and impaired her sanity. There are strong probabilities in favour of this view. Froude thinks "it can hardly be doubted;" but then he says—"if Mary was insane, the madness was of a kind which placed her absolutely under her spiritual directors, and the responsibilities for her cruelties, if responsibility be anything but a name, rests first with Gardiner, who commenced them, and in a higher degree with Reginald Pole, who was notoriously the one person in the council whom the Queen absolutely trusted."

But however charitably disposed such considerations may make us to take a more favourable view of Mary's personal character than that which history has heretofore presented, there can be no palliation whatever offered for the fearful atrocities that were committed by those who administered the government. It has been said of this reign that "it ought to be transmitted down to posterity in characters of blood," and "bloody Mary" is the designation by which the unfortunate

Queen is most commonly described. But when contrasted with other reigns, truth compels the acknowledgment that no such exceptional character rightfully belongs to it. History, for the most part, has been in the hands of rabid Churchmen and prejudiced writers, who thought that the fouler and blacker everything Popish was made to look, a corresponding degree of purity and brightness was imparted to Protestantism. Hence, bad as Mary's reign was, the picture generally drawn by such historical painters is more revolting than the reality ; while, however well merited the epithet *bloody* may be when applied to such a reign, we must confess it applies with even greater truth and force to the subsequent government of England under so-called Protestant monarchs.

Gardiner and Bonner were the bloodhounds of Mary's reign, about whose character and doings no doubt can arise. But with respect to Pole, there is some difference of opinion concerning the part he played. Burnet says he did not die rich, for he "was not a man made to raise a fortune, being, by the greatness of his birth, and his excellent virtues, carried far above such mean designs. He was a learned, modest, humble, and good-natured man, and had indeed such qualities, and such a temper, that if he could have brought the other bishops to follow his measures, or the Pope and Queen to approve of them, he might have probably done much to have reduced this nation to popery again. But God designed better things for it ; so gave up the Queen to the bloody councils of Gardiner, and the rest of the clergy."—*Hist. Ref.*, p. ii. b. 2.

In opposition to this, Strype says of Pole, that "wholly Italianized, he returned into England endued with a nature foreign and fierce, and was the very butcher and scourge of the English church."—*Life of Whitgift*, p. 6. And in his "Life of Cranmer," p. 347, he says, "Pole was not so gentle towards the heretics as was reported, but rather the contrary,

he went hand in hand with the bloody bishops of these days."

Dr. Warner, who takes a very laudatory view of Pole's character, says "he was very inconsistent in one particular, which was, that at the same time he was exclaiming against the persecution of the Reformed, and would not himself take any part in that slaughter, *he was giving commissions to others to proceed in it.*"—*Eccles. Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 402..

Archbishop Parker, observes Froude, who knew Pole well, called him *Carnifex et flagellam Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*,—the hangman and the scourge of the Church of England.

As regards the total number of the persecuted in Mary's reign, of the lives sacrificed on the scaffold, at the stake, in prison, and generally for conscience' sake, Bishop Burnet reckons the whole at 284. Lord Burleigh says, there died by imprisonments, torments, famine, and fire, near *four hundred*. Strype, in his *Memorials*, give an exact catalogue, with the particulars of each execution, and he makes the total number 288, "besides those that died of famine in sundry prisons."³³ Bogue and Bennet state that "26 clergymen, including 5 bishops, were burnt alive, and 280 persons are reckoned to have died martyrs for the Protestant faith."³⁴

Speed has classified those who were burnt as follows:—
5 Bishops; 21 Divines; 8 Gentlemen; 84 Artificers; 100 Husbandmen, Servants and Labourers; 26 Wives; 20 Widows; 9 Virgins; 2 Boys; 2 Infants; making a total of 277.³⁵

Such a destruction of human life on account merely of non-conformity with a State creed betokens a barbarous policy impossible to palliate; but while we justly and severely condemn a policy that made Mary's reign infamous, and her name odious to posterity, let us not forget that her

³³ *Eccles. Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 291, App.

³⁴ *Hist. of Dissent.*, i. 53.

³⁵ *Hist. of Eng.*, p. 852.

There can be no doubt, therefore, from the weight of evidence on the point, that Elizabeth's Protestantism had far more of a Romanistic than of an Evangelical complexion. She was, in truth, only *politically* a Protestant, like her father. She denounced the arrogant pretensions of the Papacy, because she would tolerate no *imperium in imperio*. The despotic cast of her mind would submit to no abridgment of the supremacy of her own prerogative, nor to any control, constitutional or otherwise, of her arbitrary will that she could possibly avoid. Thus, Roman Catholics who upheld the supremacy of the Pope naturally incurred her displeasure, and felt the weight of her vengeance; while, with equal heartiness, she engaged in the persecution of those who sought to maintain and advance the purity of Protestant doctrine. The "*forced conformity*" she had submitted to during her sister's reign did not teach her the practical wisdom of toleration, nor did the high order of intellect she possessed lead her to see the extreme wickedness of requiring a whole generation of thinking men to fall down and worship her assumption of dogmatic infallibility. For practically this was what she demanded!

Her mental capacity and accomplishments were unquestionably great; but she became the slave of a morbid vanity, that led her to the commission not only of many follies, but of crimes. This excessive vanity, all-absorbing and never dormant, made her ridiculous throughout life as a coquette, but, far worse, contributed to warp her judgment and steel her heart as a cruel and sanguinary persecutor. The extent to which she indulged this weakness was strangely in contrast with the sterner and more masculine qualities of her mind.

rect some of the grievous abuses connected with the administration of the Church, whereupon Elizabeth sent a message to the Commons, May 1, 1571, *that Church questions belonged to herself*, and that *they* had no business with them!—*D'Ewes' Journal*, p. 180.

Her passion for flattery was most extravagant ; adulation could never be too ridiculous or gross for her taste. Sir Walter Raleigh incurred her displeasure on one occasion for having proved unfaithful to his knightly vows of devotion, and she sent him to prison. To propitiate her forgiveness he addressed a letter to his friend, Sir Robert Cecil, that he might show it to her, as she was about to set out on one of her annual progresses. She was then *sixty years of age* ; and must not the vanity have been excessive and morbid that could derive pleasure from such fulsome and insulting rhapsody as this :—

“ My heart was never broke till this day, that I hear the Queen goes away so far off, whom I have followed so many years, with so great love and desire, in so many journeys, and am now left behind her in a dark prison all alone. While she was near at hand, that I might hear of her once in two or three days, my sorrows were the less ; but even now my heart is cast into the depth of all misery !

“ I that was wont to behold her *riding like Alexander—hunting like Diana—walking like Venus*, the gently wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph ; sometimes sitting in the shade *like a Goddess*, sometimes *singing like an Angel*, sometimes *playing like Orpheus* : behold the sorrow of this world—once amiss have bereaved me of all.”

“ All these times past,” he then exclaims, “ the loves, the sighs, the sorrows, the desires, cannot they weigh down one frail misfortune?—cannot one drop of gall be hid in so great heaps of sweetness? I may, then, conclude. *Spes et fortuna valete.*”—*Murden*, 657.

Her godson, Sir John Harrington, who is one of the very best authorities we have respecting her character, says :—“ There is almost none that waited in Queen Elizabeth’s court and observed anything but can tell that it pleased her much to seem, and to be thought, and to be told, that she looked young. The majesty and gravity of a sceptre, borne forty-four years, could not alter that nature of a woman in her.” He

Catholicism, with all its ferocity, was not by any means so bloody, so destructive of human life, and so prolific in human misery, as the so-called Protestantism which so disastrously swayed the ecclesiastical policy of succeeding reigns.

CHAPTER V.

*On the Re-establishment of the Supremacy of the Crown
under Queen Elizabeth.*

ELIZABETH, born 7th September, 1533, was therefore in the 25th year of her age when she succeeded to the throne, November 17, 1558. Those who were sincerely attached to the Reformed faith rejoiced in her accession, because they believed that her religious convictions were similar to their own. But though to some extent educated in the Reformed doctrines, she never fully accepted them, nor in reality did she ever truly sympathize with their progress.

Few characters have been transmitted to us surrounded by a falser, more dazzling, and deceptive glare than that of "the Good Queen Bess"—the "Protestant Goddess" of our school-boy days. "The low adulations of her own age, and the consenting flatteries of succeeding times, have united to throw a blaze of glory around the head of this political saint, to which she has as little claim as many of the religious saints in the calendar of Rome to theirs."—*Rev. Dr. Whitaker's Vindication, &c.*, i. 571. The four-and-forty years during which she occupied the throne were prolific in memorable events of startling magnitude and moment. The age was one of rapid transition—of awakened intellectual energy, that made itself felt in every department of human affairs. In religion, there was a yearning after spiritual development—an irrepressible desire to escape from the material grossness that overshadowed faith, and made the worship of God a degrading superstition. But Elizabeth did little to facilitate

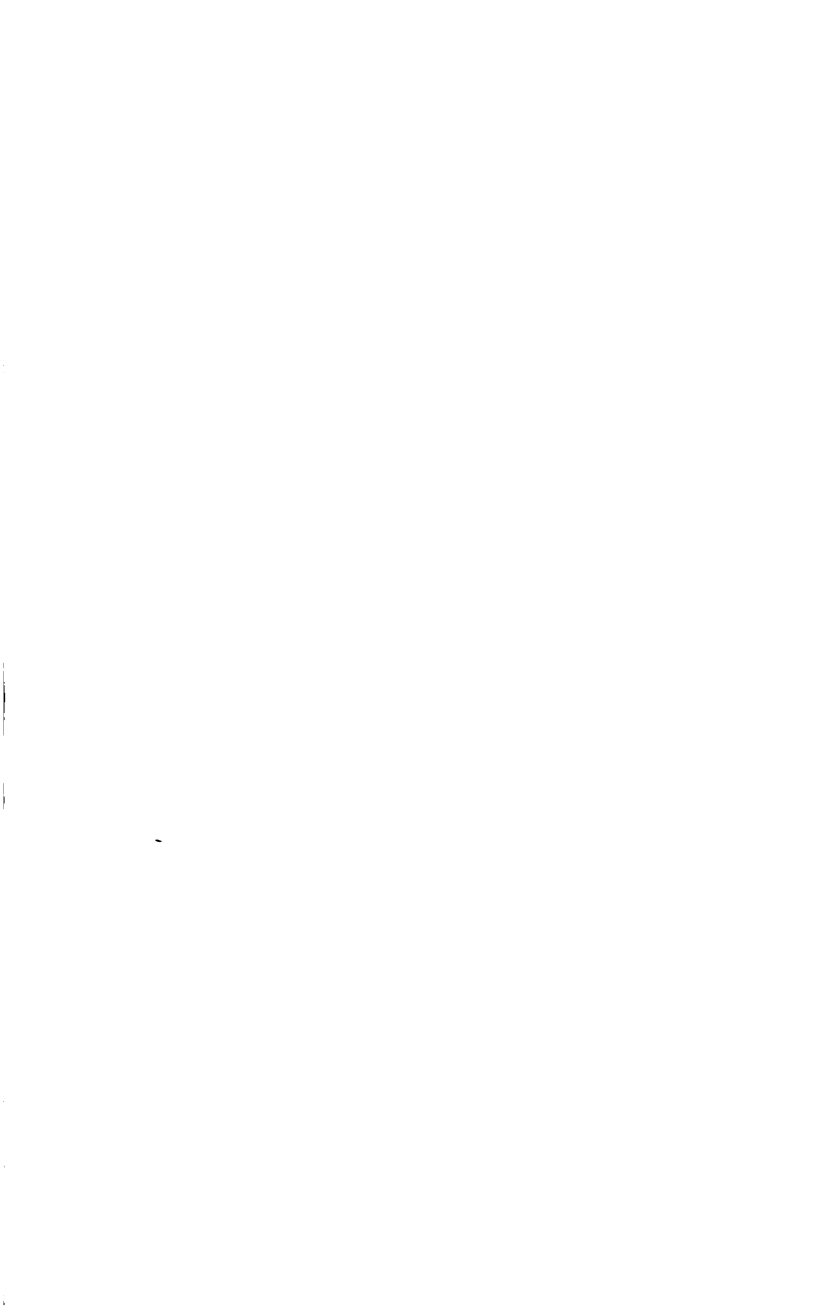
progress in this direction, and the advance that was made during her reign was achieved despite the wicked policy of repression and persecution she inherited from her father, and in enforcing which she experienced a cruel delight.

The personal character of Elizabeth was so strongly reflected in her Government, and exercised so predominant an influence on the Reformation generally, but more particularly on the re-establishment of the connection between Church and State, that, to judge of events reasonably, the leading features of her character ought to be fairly understood. "It was," says Hallam, "part of Elizabeth's character to render herself extremely prominent, and, as it were, *responsible in public esteem for every important measure of her Government*. It was difficult to consider a queen as acting merely by the advice of Ministers, who protested in Parliament that they had laboured in vain to bend her heart to their counsels."¹ We must remember, too, the vast gulf that separates the age of Elizabeth from that of Victoria, and, consequently, we must hold in abeyance, and not apply our present notions of national rights and constitutional restraints in considering the government of Elizabeth.

The arbitrary prerogatives of the Crown were everything in Elizabeth's age—now they are nothing. Now we have ministerial responsibility, a free Parliament, and a free Press,—the very best safeguards of liberty; but in her day ministerial responsibility, as we understand it, was unknown. Parliament, beyond claiming an exclusive privilege to impose taxes and vote supplies—a privilege often violated and evaded—was not free in any just sense of the word, and had no effective control over the administration of the Government; while a free Press, liberty of opinion, freedom of discussion, did not enter into the philosophy of the profoundest statesmen.

In that age the prerogatives of the Crown could be, and

¹ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 256.



were, stretched to any desirable extent. A mere proclamation was held to have all the legal force of statute law. The judges were the creatures of the Crown, removable at pleasure; the whole executive of the country was in the same position; and Parliament itself—though sometimes evincing spirit in discussion—did not do much more than register the decrees of the Crown.

It was totally impossible to obtain justice against the influence of the great and the rich. "Now-a-days the judges be afraid," said Latimer, "to hear a poor man against the rich, inasmuch that they will either pronounce against him or so drive off the poor man's suit that he shall not be able to go through with it."—*Latimer's Serm.* p. 47.

King Edward records in his *Journal*:—"The lawyers and judges have much offended in corruption and bribery." That judges were either too cowardly to do their duty against the great and the rich, or more readily corrupted to violate it, was deplorable enough in civil matters, but in criminal matters, when the Crown was concerned in obtaining a conviction, no subject had a chance of justice.

Judicial iniquity was the ordinary rule during these times. There is no room for wonder "at any verdict that could be returned by a jury, when we considered what means the Government possessed of securing it. The sheriff returned a panel, either according to express directions, of which we have proofs, or what he judged himself of the Crown's intention and interest."—*Lodge*, ii. 412; iii. 49.

In any prosecution of moment if, despite the brow-beating and ribald bullying of the bench, and the threatenings of the Crown lawyers, a verdict was returned against the Crown, then indeed, says, Hallam, "the jurors must have laid their account with appearing before the Star Chamber, lucky if they should escape, on humble retractation, with sharp words, *instead of enormous fines and indefinite imprisonment.* Until this weight

that hung upon the constitution should be taken off, there was literally no prospect of enjoying with security those civil privileges which it held forth."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 233.

"Free speech in Parliament," observes Froude, "had been one of the privileges which Henry VIII. had not attempted to interfere with. Elizabeth could never bring herself to regard it as anything but *an intolerable impertinence*."—*Hist. of Engl.*, x. 191. And he also says truly, that she always looked on the meeting of Parliament as "*the most unwelcome of necessities*."

In fact, Elizabeth's Government was practically a despotism with scarcely a check upon it. The little parliamentary restraint that existed was merely confined to supply, beyond which it was more nominal than real, so that for all purposes of administration the Queen was virtually as despotic as the Czar of All the Russias! Her Government, therefore, being so thoroughly personal, to understand the influences that swayed it we must scrutinise the prominent features of her character.

And primarily, with respect to religion, it must be noted that, like her father, she was never fully and sincerely Protestant. "Elizabeth," observes Froude, "*was half a Catholic in theory*."² According to Burnet and others, she was wholly so in some material points of faith and practice. It would be unfair to judge of her opinions by her conduct during her sister's reign, when the profound dissimulation of which she was capable led her to profess convictions that she never felt. Lingard makes it a reproach that she then professed adherence to Roman dogma, and "not only accompanied her sister to *mass*, but opened a chapel in her own house, and wrote to the Emperor for leave to purchase in Flanders a chalice, cross, and the ornaments usually employed in the celebration of divine worship."³

² *Hist. Eng.*, x. 2.

³ *Hist. of Eng.*, vol. vii. p. 184.

Lingard also relates that, when on her death-bed, Mary had her suspicions respecting her sister's sincerity, in order to disabuse her mind of such doubts, Elizabeth solemnly protested "*she was a true and conscientious believer in the Catholic creed, nor could she do more now than she had repeatedly done before, which was to confirm her assertion with her oath.*" And he goes on to state how Elizabeth made similar declarations "to the Duke of Feria, who had come on a visit to the Queen from her husband ; and so convinced was that nobleman of her sincerity, that he not only removed the doubts of Mary, but assured Philip that *the succession of Elizabeth would cause no alteration in the worship now established by law.*" Lingard also quotes from a MS. life of the Duchess of Feria, who was an English Lady, that "she (Elizabeth) prayed God that the earth might open and swallow her up alive *if she were not a true Roman Catholic.*"⁴

There is no doubt that Elizabeth, to some extent, did dissemble and make protestations not altogether consistent with the truth. The Emperor's ambassador, writing to him 4th September, 1553, intimates that fear impelled Elizabeth to have recourse to duplicity. He says :—

"*When she saw that her resistance might bring some calamity upon her, she requested an audience of the Queen, to speak to her in private. There she fell on her knees before her, and said, weeping, that she saw clearly how little affection her Majesty appeared to have for her ; that she did not know in what she could have offended her if it were not upon the subject of religion, in which she was excusable, as she had been brought up in what she professed, without having ever heard any doctor who taught otherwise. She begged to have some books which inculcated a doctrine different to those of the Protestants, which till then she had read, to try whether the perusal of works composed in defence of the Catholics would lead her to adopt different sentiments. She asked also for a man of learning to instruct her.*"

⁴ Hist. of Eng., vol. v. p. 258.

Turner gives the original despatch, and says that Elizabeth "*was forced to make the external conformities that have been mentioned from the terror of what was preparing for her if she refused.*" And he very properly observes:—"Such *forced conformities disgrace only the tyrannizing power which extorts them.* Death was held out as the proposed alternative, and yet this terrified compliance has been sarcastically mentioned as an imputation on Elizabeth by a friend of that menacing party on whom alone all condemnation should fall."⁵

Admitting all this to the fullest extent desired, and allowing that condemnation too severe could not be passed on Mary and her intolerant advisers, there are, however, two things to be borne in mind:—First, that it is questionable, judging by her subsequent conduct, if much violence was done towards any Protestant convictions Elizabeth really had by obliging her to attend Roman Catholic worship; and second, that bad as Mary's conduct was with respect to "*forced conformities*"—reprehensible as she was in attempting to coerce conscience, Elizabeth, with all her personal experience, which ought to have taught her charity and toleration, was infinitely worse.

Even after Elizabeth had ascended the throne, and when the critical circumstances of her position had made a Protestant policy, in a political sense, a matter not so much of choice as of positive necessity, we find that she still remained superstitiously attached to Roman doctrine and the pageantry of Roman worship.

Neal says:—"She inherited the spirit of her father, and affected a great deal of magnificence in her devotions. She was fond of many of the old rites and ceremonies in which she had been educated."⁶

She had a crucifix, with the Blessed Virgin and St. John, in

⁵ Political Hist. of Eng., part ii. p. 259-60.

⁶ Hist. of Puritans, i. 105.

her chapel; and when Sandys, Bishop of Worcester, spoke to her against it, *she threatened to deprive him!*

The gentlemen and singing children officiated in their surplices, says Neal, and the priests in their copes; the altar was furnished with rich plate, and two gilt candlesticks with lighted candles, and a massy crucifix of silver in the midst; the service was sung not only with the sound of organs, but with artificial music of cornets, sackbuts, &c., on solemn festivals.

"The ceremonies observed by the Knights of the Garter in their adoration towards the altar, which had been abolished by King Edward, and revived by Queen Mary, were retained. In short, the service performed in the Queen's chapel, and in sundry Cathedrals, was so splendid and showy, that *foreigners could not distinguish it from the Roman*, except it was performed in the English tongue."—*Hist. Puritans*, i. 132.

"She seemed to think the use of images in churches might be a means to stir up devotion," says Burnet, "and that, at least it would draw all people to frequent them more. The Reformed Bishops opposed this vehemently."

It has been truly observed that "*she abjured nothing in Popery but submission to a higher authority than her own, and was no further a Protestant than was necessary to make herself a Pope.*"⁷ "Elizabeth," says Hallam, "though resolute against submitting to the Papal supremacy, was not so adverse to all the tenets abjured by Protestants, and loved also a more splendid worship than had prevailed in her brother's reign."⁸ "Her inclination towards the Lutheran party," says Strype, "was not altogether from religion, but from policy."¹⁰

⁷ Hist. of Reform., p. 2, b. 3.

⁸ Bogue and Bennet's Hist. of Dissenters, vol. i. p. 67.

⁹ Constitutional Hist. of Eng., i. 172.

¹⁰ Annals, ii. 1.

The Puritan party in the House of Commons introduced a Bill to cor-

There can be no doubt, therefore, from the weight of evidence on the point, that Elizabeth's Protestantism had far more of a Romanistic than of an Evangelical complexion. She was, in truth, only *politically* a Protestant, like her father. She denounced the arrogant pretensions of the Papacy, because she would tolerate no *imperium in imperio*. The despotic cast of her mind would submit to no abridgment of the supremacy of her own prerogative, nor to any control, constitutional or otherwise, of her arbitrary will that she could possibly avoid. Thus, Roman Catholics who upheld the supremacy of the Pope naturally incurred her displeasure, and felt the weight of her vengeance; while, with equal heartiness, she engaged in the persecution of those who sought to maintain and advance the purity of Protestant doctrine. The "*forced conformity*" she had submitted to during her sister's reign did not teach her the practical wisdom of toleration, nor did the high order of intellect she possessed lead her to see the extreme wickedness of requiring a whole generation of thinking men to fall down and worship her assumption of dogmatic infallibility. For practically this was what she demanded!

Her mental capacity and accomplishments were unquestionably great; but she became the slave of a morbid vanity, that led her to the commission not only of many follies, but of crimes. This excessive vanity, all-absorbing and never dormant, made her ridiculous throughout life as a coquette, but, far worse, contributed to warp her judgment and steel her heart as a cruel and sanguinary persecutor. The extent to which she indulged this weakness was strangely in contrast with the sterner and more masculine qualities of her mind.

rect some of the grievous abuses connected with the administration of the Church, whereupon Elizabeth sent a message to the Commons, May 1, 1571, *that Church questions belonged to herself*, and that *they* had no business with them!—*D'Ewes' Journal*, p. 180.

Her passion for flattery was most extravagant ; adulation could never be too ridiculous or gross for her taste. Sir Walter Raleigh incurred her displeasure on one occasion for having proved unfaithful to his knightly vows of devotion, and she sent him to prison. To propitiate her forgiveness he addressed a letter to his friend, Sir Robert Cecil, that he might show it to her, as she was about to set out on one of her annual progresses. She was then *sixty years of age* ; and must not the vanity have been excessive and morbid that could derive pleasure from such fulsome and insulting rhapsody as this :—

“ My heart was never broke till this day, that I hear the Queen goes away so far off, whom I have followed so many years, with so great love and desire, in so many journeys, and am now left behind her in a dark prison all alone. While she was near at hand, that I might hear of her once in two or three days, my sorrows were the less ; but even now my heart is cast into the depth of all misery !

“ I that was wont to behold her *riding like Alexander—hunting like Diana—walking like Venus*, the gently wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph ; sometimes sitting in the shade *like a Goddess*, sometimes *singing like an Angel*, sometimes *playing like Orpheus* : behold the sorrow of this world—once amiss have bereaved me of all.”

“ All these times past,” he then exclaims, “ the loves, the sighs, the sorrows, the desires, cannot they weigh down one frail misfortune?—cannot one drop of gall be hid in so great heaps of sweetness? I may, then, conclude. *Spes et fortuna valete.*”—*Murden*, 657.

Her godson, Sir John Harrington, who is one of the very best authorities we have respecting her character, says :—“ There is almost none that waited in Queen Elizabeth’s court and observed anything but can tell that it pleased her much to seem, and to be thought, and to be told, that she looked young. The majesty and gravity of a sceptre, borne forty-four years, could not alter that nature of a woman in her.” He

then goes on to relate that the Bishop of St. David's was appointed to preach before the Court at Richmond in 1596:—

—"and wishing in a godlie zeal that she would thinke some time of mortalitee, *being then full sixty-three years of age*, he took his text, fitt for that purpose, out of Psalms xc. 12, 'O teache us to number our daies, that we incline our hearts unto wisdome,' which text he handled so well, so learnedly, and so respectfully, as I dare undertake he thought, and so should I, *if I had not been somewhat better acquainted with her humour*, that it would have well pleased her, or at least in no waie offended her. But when he had spoken a while of some sacred and mysticall numbers, as 3 for the Trinitie, 3 times 3 for the heavenly Hierarchy, 7 for the Sabbath, and 7 times 7 for a Jubilee; and last, 7 times 9 for the grand climactricall yeare, *she, perceiving whereto it tended, began to be troubled with it.*' When he had concluded, the Queen said plainly 'he should have kept his arithmetick for himself;,' 'but I see,' said she, 'the greatest clerks are not the wisest men,' and so went away for the time disconcerted. The Bishop was punished by an order 'to keep within his house for a time,' which he did, till the Queen's anger was assuaged!"¹¹—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, ii. 216.

The Bishop of London, on one occasion, when preaching before her, animadverted on the vanity of the passion for decking the body too finely, and endeavoured to raise her thoughts from the ornaments of dress to the richness of heaven. She was exceedingly displeased, and said that if he again ventured to hold discourse on such matters, *she would soon fit him for heaven*, but he should walk there without a staff, and leave his mantle behind him. "Perchance," says Harrington, who relates the incident, "the Bishop hath never

¹¹ It was comparatively harmless that her vanity should seek indulgence in the extravagant acquisition of dresses, jewels, &c. "Her wardrobe contained, at the time of her death," says Dr. Birch, "*more than two thousand gowns*, with all things answerable."

Besides, there was a large collection of costly jewellery, chiefly presents from courtiers, &c., and others who sought favours, and from persons whose houses she visited.

sought her Highness' wardrobe, or he would have chosen another text."—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, i. 171.

Yet she was brought up economically enough, for, by the cruelty of her father, she was in youth left so destitute of ordinary raiment that her governess, Lady Bryan, wrote to Cromwell:—"I beseech you to be good, my Lord, to my Lady, and to all hers, and that she may have some raiment. She has neither gown, nor kirtle, nor petticoat, nor no manner of linen, nor foresmocks, nor kerchiefs, nor sleeves, nor rails, nor body stitchets, nor muffles, nor biggins."—*Von Raumer's England, &c.*, i. 141.

The Duke of Anjou conveyed his opinion respecting her appearance in such outrageously absurd terms that it appears almost incredible she was not offended. "*She was*," he said, "*the most perfect beauty that God had made during the last five hundred years!*"—*Digges*, 201. And she received this with magnanimous self-complacency.

Of her and her sister Mary's "beauty," Burnet says:—"Elizabeth had much the better of *that modest share* that was between them."

This excessive vanity was the weakness of her character that revolted most violently against the simplicity of Puritanism. She whose ears were always tingling with the preposterous adulation of servile courtiers, could not hearken with complacency to the words of soberness and truth, even in religious matters. In the exercise of her despotic supremacy as the infallible Governess of the Church, she would gladly have imposed the Anglo-Romanism of her father on the nation. The public voice declared so emphatically against roods, relics, images, crucifixes, and the whole gorgeous paraphernalia of Romish worship, that, to maintain her popularity, which she dearly prized, she was compelled to give way, and order their removal from churches, as early in her reign as 1559, while, with that insincerity and inconsistency too ob-

servable in her conduct throughout life, she retained them all in her own chapel, which was described as "*the pattern and precedent of all superstition.*"¹²

"This concession, like all concessions, she must," says Hallam, "have made very reluctantly, for we find proofs the next year of her inclination to restore them ; but the strenuous opposition of men so distinguished as Jewell, Sandys, and Grindal, of whom the first declared his intention of resigning his bishopric in case this return towards superstition should be made, compelled Elizabeth to relinquish her project."¹³ And Strype relates how Archbishop Parker expected, at one time, that the Queen would make such a retrograde movement towards Popery as would compel even him, with all his High Churchism, to disobey her !

Not only in ritualistic observances was Elizabeth essentially Roman, but, among other things, she had a Popish aversion to the marriage of the clergy which no reasoning could overcome ; and she always displayed a vicious temper when her superstitious prejudices on this subject were not held in respect. In the injunctions issued in 1559, on the occasion of a visitation by Ecclesiastical Commissioners, there was one by which the Queen sought to impose all the restrictions she possibly could on clerical marriages. It was directed that no priest or deacon should marry without the allowance of the Bishops, and two justices of the peace dwelling near the woman's abode, nor without the consent of her parents or kinsfolk, or, for want of these, of her master and mistress, on pain of not being permitted to exercise the ministry or hold any benefice ; and that the marriage of Bishops should be approved by the Metropolitan, and also by Commissioners appointed by the Queen.¹⁴

¹² Strype's Annals, i. 471.

¹³ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 173.

¹⁴ "The priests will no longer be permitted to have women," said the

Subsequently, in 1561, she issued another injunction of even a more unjustifiable character. It directed that no member of a College, or of a Cathedral, should have his wife living within its precincts, under pain of forfeiting all his preferments. At this time Cecil wrote to Archbishop Parker, stating that he had experienced the greatest difficulty in preventing the Queen from altogether prohibiting the marriage of priests!¹⁵ And in a letter the Archbishop, with the servile adulation of a courtier, says: "I was in a horror to hear such words to come from *her mild nature and christianly learned conscience* as she spoke concerning God's holy ordinance and institution of matrimony."¹⁶ The "*mild nature and christianly learned conscience*" of the Queen was fittingly displayed in her treatment of her servile Archbishop, and also in her suspension of Fletcher, Bishop of London, of her own authority, because he married "a fine lady, and a widow!"¹⁷ In fact, as Supreme Governess of the Church, she treated her Bishops with less respect and consideration than if they had been her lackeys!

It is beyond doubt that the marriages of the clergy were not held legal in the first part, at least, of Elizabeth's reign. She would never give her consent to the repeal of the statute, passed in her sister's reign, which rendered such marriages illegal. "Accordingly," says Hallam, "the bishops and clergy, though they married by connivance, or rather by an ungracious permission, saw with very great dissatisfaction *their children treated by the law as the offspring of concubinage*." This continued, in legal strictness, till the first year of James, when the statute of Mary was explicitly repealed.¹⁸

chaplain of the Duke of Norfolk, when Henry VIII. declared for strict celibacy, and made Cranmer put away his wife; "*but the women will have priests*."—*Soame's Hist. of the Reform.*, ii. 373.

¹⁵ Life of Parker, 107.

¹⁶ Ibid. Appendix, 29.

¹⁷ Strype's Life of Whitgift, 458.

¹⁸ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 173.

Bishop Sandys writes to Archbishop Parker, April, 1559:—"The Queen's Majesty will wink at it (*marriage*), but not establish it by law, *which is nothing else but to bastard our children.*" This imperious conduct was cruel and immoral. Placing marriage and concubinage on the same level was inviting evils too certain to happen. It could not be matter of surprise that, even among clericals, the admitted license of concubinage would be preferred, by some, to the moral restraints and legal responsibilities of marriage. No doubt, concubinage involved a contract binding *in foro divino*, though not legally recognisable *in foro humano*, but the evils of such a system need not be dwelt on. It was, however, the custom for the clergy in some places to pay the Bishop for a licence to keep a concubine.¹⁹ Sir John Harrington relates, concerning the Queen's treatment of Parker and his wife, that—

"Though this Archbishop dissembled not his marriage, yet Queen Elizabeth would not dissemble her dislike to it. For, whereas it pleased her often to come to his house, in respect to her favour to him that had been her mother's chaplain; being once above the rest greatly feasted, at her parting from thence, the Archbishop and his wife being together, she gave him very special thanks, with gracious and honourable terms, and then looking on his wife: 'and you,' saith she, '*Madam* I may not call you, and *Mistress* I am ashamed to call you, so I know not what to call you, but yet do I thank you.'

"It is true she misliked marriage in Bishops, and was not very favourable to allow it in some of the laity. . . . But for clergymen, *ceteris paribus*, and sometime *imparibus* too, she preferred the single man before the married."—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, ii. 16.

"After she ascended the throne, a Bill was introduced into the House of Commons," says Burnet, "*for restoring of all persons that were deprived of their benefices because they were married.* But this the Queen ordered to be laid aside." There

¹⁹ Life of Parker, 203.

was, however, no law against the clergy marrying, as Queen Mary had only repealed the laws of Edward VI., which allowed it, but had passed none against it, the canon law in her reign being sufficient for the purpose.²⁰

But the canon law was binding on the clergy in this respect, not having been expressly repealed by statute, and the Ecclesiastical Courts would enforce it, so that Archbishop Parker's wife having died before him, her brother became her heir-at-law, though she left children. The Archbishop, however, procured letters of legitimation, in order to render them capable of inheritance.²¹ Others, says Strype, did the same.²² "I conceive," says Hallam, "that such letters were beyond the Queen's power to grant, and could not have obtained any regard in a court of law."²³

With a disposition thus essentially Popish, it was natural that Elizabeth should not have been averse to reconciliation with Rome, provided it could be effected on terms agreeable to herself. Her imperious temper and love of arbitrary power made her regard ecclesiastical supremacy as a most desirable and valuable prerogative of the Crown. In exchange for the exercise of that prerogative being secured to her by a concordat with Rome, she would willingly have consented that religious worship should have been continued in conformity with Roman discipline, with some trivial changes in dogma. A compromise on this basis was more than once suggested as most agreeable to her feelings, and it might have been very easily arranged, had not the dominant factions in the Vatican fortunately proved so implacable and impracticable.

If Elizabeth had a decided attachment to any form of religion, it was certainly manifested in a superstitious veneration for the gorgeous ceremonial of Roman-Catholicism; and it was simply owing to the impetuous arrogance and blind im-

²⁰ Hist. of Reform., p. ii. b. 3.

²² Annals, i. 8.

²¹ Life of Parker, p. 511.

²³ Const. Hist. of Eng., 174.

policy of the Papacy, that she was reluctantly forced, in self-defence, to maintain hostile relations with the Holy See. It was, indeed, most fortunate for England that when she ascended the throne, a Pontiff so imperious and indiscreet as Paul IV. was seated in the chair of Peter. The Roman Catholic historian, Dr. Lingard, deplores, naturally enough, the blundering indiscretion of this arrogant and obstinate old man, who did all in his power to drive Elizabeth into dependence on the Reformed party for the security of her throne.

Sir Edward Carne, who had been her sister's ambassador to Rome, notified to the Pope the succession of Elizabeth, accompanied with an assurance, says Lingard, that she "had determined to offer no violence to the consciences of her subjects, whatever might be their religious creed." But, he continues—"it was the misfortune of Paul, who had passed his 80th year, that he adopted opinions with the credulity, and maintained them with the pertinacity, of old age. His ear had been pre-occupied by the diligence of the French ambassador, who suggested that to admit the succession of Elizabeth would be to approve the pretended marriage of her parents, Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn; to annul the decisions of Clement VII. and Paul III., to prejudice the claim of the true and legitimate heir, Mary Queen of Scots; and to offend the King of France, who had determined to support the right of his daughter-in-law with all the power of his realm."²⁴

Thus artfully played upon by the French representative—who desired the excommunication of Elizabeth in furtherance of the policy of his Court—the haughty pontiff replied with galling insult, "that *England was held in fee of the Apostolic See*; that *Elizabeth could not succeed by hereditary right, being illegitimate*; nor could he contradict the declarations made in that matter by Clement VII. and Paul III.; that it was a great

²⁴ Hist. Eng., vii. 347.

boldness in her to assume the crown without his consent, for which in reason she deserved no favour at his hands ; yet *if she would renounce her pretensions, and refer herself wholly to him*, he would show a fatherly affection to her, and do everything for her that could consist with the dignity of the Apostolic See." ²⁵

Thus the fatuity of the Pope, and the selfish policy of the French Court, repelled the advances of Elizabeth towards reconciliation, and forced her, as Lingard laments, in opposition to her own inclinations, to rely on the Reformers for support. "It is probable," he says, "that in her own mind she was indifferent to either form of worship : but the moment she ascended the throne, a catholic competitor appeared. Mary Stuart, at the command of her father-in-law, assumed the title of Queen of England, and quartered the English arms with those of Scotland and France ; and the answer of the Pontiff proved, what was already known, that on Catholic principles Elizabeth had *no hereditary right to the Crown*. The new Ministers, whose prospects depended on the change, urged their mistress to put down a religion that proclaimed her a bastard, and to support

²⁶ Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation, part ii. book 3 ; Pallavicino, iii. 521.

The editor of Dod's Church History of England does not believe this story of the Pope's intemperate reply to Carne, and conjectures that it was coined by the inventive powers of Father Paul, who first published it in his History of the Council of Trent. From him it is supposed that Spondanus and Pallavicino took the story, which from them passed to Catholic and Protestant historians generally. But Hallam is of opinion that it is doubtful whether Spondanus would have relied exclusively on the authority of Father Paul, and conjectures "that the anecdote had been already in circulation, even if it had never appeared in print (a negative hard to establish), before the publication of the History of the Council of Trent. Nor is it improbable that Paul, according to the violence of his disposition, had uttered some such language, and even to Carne himself, though not, as the story represents it, in his reply to an official communication."—*Constitutional Hist. of Eng.*, i. 110.

the Reformed doctrines which could give stability to her throne."²⁸

Sir William Cecil—afterwards created Lord Burghley, to whom more than to any other is due whatever statesmanship inspired the Government in this reign—strove to make Elizabeth believe that a Protestant policy was an absolute necessity in her position. He had no difficulty in getting the Council of State to adopt his advice and recommend it. "Most of those who composed the Council," says Burnet, "*had complied with all the changes that had been made in religion backward and forward since the latter end of King Henry's reign*, and were so dexterous at it, that they were still employed in every new revolution." The men who figured in the foreground of that profligate age were, indeed, with very rare exceptions, distinguished for the corruption, rapacity, duplicity and perfidy that marked their public conduct;—vices from which even the ablest ministers and the most astute statesmen were not altogether exempt.

But while Elizabeth was anxious enough to gratify her own arbitrary temper by exalting the regal prerogative above the law, by re-establishing the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown, and resuming the large grants which Mary had made to the Church, still she did not abandon the idea of effecting a reconciliation with Rome. It was this disposition to force all her subjects into one fold—this hankering after reconciliation with Papal unity—that led to the cruel persecutions of the Reformed party, which is so foul a blot on this reign; yet, by a strange perversity, Elizabeth has been extolled as a "Protestant Queen" *par excellence*!

²⁸ Hist. Eng., vii. 348.

Mary Queen of Scots was merely a tool in the hands of the Guise faction. It was at their instigation that she caused the Arms of England to be painted, wrought, stamped, engraved, on all carpets, cushions, household furniture, vases, &c. She had them displayed at tournaments, and in the Courts of Justice.—*Hayne's State Papers*, p. 252.

On the 25th of February, 1570, eleven years after she had ascended the throne, Pope Pius V., a furious persecutor, and author of the insolent bull *In Cæna Domini*, fulminated an excommunication against her as "a usurper," a "vassal of iniquity," a "heretic, and an encourager of heretics." In the style of such documents he deprives her of her royal crown and dignity, absolves all her subjects from every obligation of fidelity and allegiance, anathematises all who adhere to her, and involves in the same sentence of excommunication, and consigns to eternal perdition, all who presume to obey her orders, commands, or laws for the future, and excites all foreign potentates to take up arms against her. Yet after the publication of this bull, which excited her subjects to revolt, and declared her assassination laudable and holy, we find her still clinging to the idea of reconciliation with Rome, in which she was countenanced by her greatest and wisest minister, Lord Burghley!

Froude relates that in November, 1572, Lord Burghley intimated to the Spanish representative that, "if the King of Spain would consent to some truly general council in which all opinions could be fairly represented, and if the practical abuses of the Holy See could be reformed, *neither England nor Elizabeth would refuse to return to communion with Christendom. His mistress was neither Calvinist nor Huguenot, and she believed as much as Philip in the need of authority in the Church.*"²⁷

Thus there was no foundation, in fact, for the ardent Protestant character that has been bestowed on Elizabeth. In disposition and in superstition she was essentially Roman. Protestantism, at home and abroad, she merely used as a means to secure her throne, exalt her prerogatives, and augment her power. The Church she valued as a political organization more than as a religious institution, and its re-

²⁷ Hist. Eng., x. 429.

establishment involved its complete subjection to her authority as its *governess*. Under such a system there could be no toleration for independence of opinion, and the clergy, from the highest to the lowest, had no alternative but to resign their profession, if they were not prepared to abandon conscience to the most humiliating servility their imperious "governess" might capriciously exact.

We are thus furnished with a true key to the persecuting policy adopted by Elizabeth towards the honest and zealous Puritans, who alone by their devoted sincerity and unconquerable fidelity, preserved English Protestantism during her reign, and transmitted it as a glorious inheritance to posterity. "It would have fared ill with England," as Froude admits, "had there been no better blood there than filtered in the sluggish veins of the officials of the Establishment. There needed an enthusiasm fierier far to encounter the revival of Catholic fanaticism; and if the young Puritans, in the heat and glow of their convictions, snapped their traces and flung off their harness, *it was they, after all, who saved the Church which attempted to disown them*, and with the Church saved also the stolid mediocrity to which the fates then and ever committed and commit the government of it."²⁸

Elizabeth's papistical predilections rendered the scriptural simplicity of Puritanism abhorrent to her mind. Not only so, but she hated the Puritans for their moral teaching, their moral discipline, their moral manners, and their moral lives, which contrasted so reproachfully with the licentiousness in which her Court wallowed. Faunt, private secretary to Walsingham, uttered a sad complaint about having to live in such an immoral atmosphere as the Court. "The only discontent I have," he writes, "is to live where is so little godliness and exercise of religion, so dissolute manners and corrupt conversation generally, which I find to be worse than

²⁸ Hist. of Eng., x. 115.

when I knew the place first."²⁹ In a subsequent letter, under date "London, 6 Aug. 1583," he describes the Court as not improving as years roll on. "My mind," he says, "is most grievously wounded with the view I am there constrained to have of all enormities—*where sin reigneth in the highest degree.*"³⁰

It was the corruption of the Court, says Froude, that thwarted the wise designs of her ministers, and made Elizabeth act with deceit and treachery towards them. "In Burghley's presence she could be argued into reason; *when he left her, she fell back under the persuasion of Leicester and the poisonous household clique, the nest of traitors, male and female, who were for ever busy undermining her wiser judgment, and thwarting the influence of her Ministers.*"³¹ And again he testifies to the want of moral principle in her conduct. Dissimulation was so deep a part of her nature that she thought perfidious conduct involved no reproach, and says Froude, throughout life "persisted in her peculiar policy of *breaking every promise by which she had bound herself, when its fulfilment was inconvenient.*"³²

Her vacillating conduct with respect to marriage also discloses a peculiar feature of her character. The position of the succession made it most desirable that she should marry, for "never," as Hallam observes, "had a Sovereign's marriage been more desirable for a kingdom." No one calculated when the Queen ascended the throne that her reign would extend over nearly half a century, and the contemplation of her death without issue, filled the Protestant mind with alarm, for there was no alternative presented but a Popish succession in the person of Mary Queen of Scots, or a contested succession, which involved the fearful calamities of civil war. Hence the urgent representations of Parliament to the Queen on the

²⁹ Birch's Mission of Eliz., i. 26.

³⁰ Ibid., i. 39.

³¹ Hist. of Eng., x. 344.

³² Ibid., x. 349.

subject of her marriage, which she treated with coy prudery, affectation, or anger, just as the whim was upon her.

After befooling the Archduke Charles for some years with negotiations for a treaty of marriage, she suddenly broke off, on the alleged ground that she could not tolerate even the private exercise of his religion!—"a difficulty," says Hallam, "which, whether real or ostensible, recurred in all her subsequent negotiations of a similar nature." But her most indecorous matrimonial negotiations were with the royal family of France. Charles IX. she coquetted with, then took up his brother the Duke of Anjou, afterwards King of Poland and Henry III. of France; dismissing him in turn, at the matronly age of forty-six got her fancy ensnared by the captivating qualities of his brother, the Duke of Alençon, then a youth of twenty-four!

It would appear that this was a real passion—as ardent as "melting snow" could feel—and as endurable also. He was created Duke of Anjou when his brother ascended the throne, and Elizabeth invited him to pay her a visit *incognito*. "Her Council, though several of them in their deliberations had much inclined against the preposterous alliance, yet, in the end, displaying the compliance usual with the servants of self-willed princes, agreed, 'conceiving,' as they say, 'her earnest disposition for this her marriage,' to further it all in their power."³³ When the Council waited on her with this resolution in favour of the marriage, she soundly rated those whom she believed were opposed to it. Yet she dallied with the matter for two years, induced the Duke again to visit England, to his great disgust—her coquetry in this strange proceeding breeding her, as Walsingham wrote from Paris, "greater dishonour than I dare commit to paper."³⁴ That she ultimately broke off the marriage must be ascribed, says Hallam, "to the suspiciousness and irresolution of her character,

³³ Hallam's Const. Hist. Eng., i. 232.

³⁴ Strype's Annals, iii. 2.

which, acting for once conjointly with her good understanding, overcome a disgraceful inclination.”³⁵

To her first Parliament she declared her intention never to marry ; but if sincere, how censurable her conduct respecting the various proposals of marriage she courted, the hopes she encouraged, the systematic dissimulation she practised, and the indelicate coquetry she appeared to delight in, even after she had passed the meridian of life and attained an age when

“The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment.”

The long list of her suitors included her brother-in-law, Philip of Spain ; the Archduke Charles ; the Infant Don Carlos ; Eric King of Sweden ; Charles IX. of France, and his two brothers, the Dukes of Anjou and Alençon ; Adolphus Duke of Holstein ; the Count Palatine Cassimer, and several others, besides those who may be distinguished as her home list of admirers and suitors, of whom Leicester was the chief and the most profligate.

Elizabeth's infatuation with respect to Leicester could not have been more strongly evinced than by her declaration to the French Ambassador, Castlenau—“That he was the most virtuous and perfect man she knew !” Contemporary authorities more unprejudiced, represent him as a finished hypocrite, professing strict Puritanical principles to serve his purposes ; but in reality arrogant, selfish, licentious, unscrupulous as to the means he employed to gain his ends, and accused of having put his own wife to death in the hope of marrying the Queen. “Few will pretend to explore the labyrinths of Elizabeth's heart,” says Hallam ; “yet we may almost conclude that her passion for this favourite kept up a struggle against her wisdom for the first seven or eight years of her reign.”—*Constit. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 124.

³⁵ *Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 233.

"Leicester," says Dr. Birch, "was the most obnoxious of all who were employed by her, and suspected on good grounds of the most shocking crimes, which he affected to conceal under high pretensions to piety."—*Memoirs of Elizabeth*, i. 6.

Dr. Heylin says, "Sir Robert Dudley, the second son of the Duke of Northumberland, she made, soon after she came to the throne, Lord Denbigh and Earl of Leicester, having before made him her Master of Horse, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and a Knight of the Garter; and she now gave him the fair manor of Denbigh, with more gentlemen owing suit and service to it than any other in England in the hands of a subject, adding even to this the goodly castle and manor of Kenilworth.

"Advanced to this height, he engrossed unto himself the disposing of all offices in Court and State, and of all preferments in the Church, proving, in fine, so unappeasable in his avarice, and so insatiable in his lusts, so sacrilegious in his rapines, so false in promises, and so treacherous in point of trust, and finally so destructive of the lives and properties of particular persons, that his little finger lay far heavier on the English subjects than the loins of all the favourites of the last two kings."—*Hist. of the Reformation—Eliz.*, p. 108.

In the year 1575, Leicester, whom Camden called "her evil genius," gave the Queen fêtes at Kenilworth, which lasted seventeen days, and were estimated to have cost some £60,000—an enormous sum in those days. Yet on his death she shed some tears; but recollecting he was in debt to her, ordered his effects to be sold forthwith for payment.—*Camden*, 583.

The slanderous imputations to which her coquetry with Leicester exposed her, had no other foundation than her own open indiscretion. Her affection for him indeed could never have been very profound. In one of her poems there is a line—

"For I am soft, and made of melting snow,"

which may be taken to represent the state of her feelings, when the tender passion was in a melting mood—harsh and ungenial even when uncongealed.

There is no evidence to warrant the belief that Elizabeth had committed herself as Whitaker so broadly states, and the scandal of the age alleged. The elder D'Israeli says—"The secrecy of her amours is not so wonderful as it seems, if there were impediments to any but extern gallantries."—*Curiosities of Literature—art. Elizabeth*. This was the popular belief. "The people," says Camden, "when they were earnest for her marriage, cursed Huic, the Queen's physician, as a diswader of her marriage *ob nescio quam muliebrem impotentiam*." (i. 104.)

"Elizabeth appears," says Turner, "to have early settled her mind to lead a single life, and at no period of her long reign did her real intentions seem to be otherwise. . . . Allusions to some personal infirmities, which occasionally occur, might afford us a more explanatory cause; but these are not elucidated by any documents which have descended to us. Yet as such a notion is not likely to have been gratuitously invented, we may be induced to imagine that it originated from private information, of which no particulars have been disclosed."—*Modern Hist. of Eng.*, p. ii. p. 698, *note*.

One of the most barbarous acts of her reign was committed in consequence of the hostility of public feeling to the contemplated French marriage, which every one believed the Queen was about to contract. John Stubbs, a student of Lincoln's Inn, published a work entitled, "The Gaping Gulf wherein England will be swallowed up with the French Marriage." The Queen was so enraged at this publication that she ordered Stubbs to be prosecuted, with Pape, the distributor of the work, under a statute passed in Mary's reign against writing and dispersing seditious libels; "and although the ablest judges and lawyers were not satisfied as to the effect of

this statute, yet were Stubbs' and Pape's right hand both cut off with a butcher's knife and a mallet, in the market-place in Westminster."³⁶ Camden, who was present at this cruel scene, says that a butcher's cleaver was driven through the wrist with a mallet, and that when Stubbs' right hand was struck off, "he pulled off his hat with his left, and said, with a loud voice, 'God save the Queen!'—to the amazement of the spectators, who stood silent, either out of horror of the punishment, or pity to the man, or hatred to the match."

This barbarous punishment was inflicted for a work that did not exceed the bounds of legitimate expostulation, according to the tone of the day. Stubbs, with perfect truth, said—"This man (the Duke of Anjou) is a son of Henry II., whose family race, since he married with Catherine of Italie, is fatal, as it were, to the Gospel, and have been every one after the other, as a Domitian after Nero, as a Trajan after Domitian, and as Julianus after Trajan. Here is, therefore, an imp of the Crown of France to marry with the crowned nymph of England." This was written after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, of which the Duke of Anjou, his brother, and his mother were the chief concoctors.

About the same time that Stubbs published his book, Sir Philip Sidney wrote a letter to the Queen, in which he refers far more contemptuously than poor Stubbs did to her contemplated marriage. "How the hearts of your people will be galled," he said, "if not alienated, when they shall see you take a husband, a Frenchman, and a Papist; in whom the very common people well know this, that he is the son of the Jezabel of our age—that his brother made oblation of his own sister's marriage—the easier to make massacres of our brethren in belief. As long as he is but monsieur in might, and a Papist in profession, he neither can nor will greatly shield you; and if he grow to be King, his defence will be like Ajax's

³⁶ *Nugæ Antiquæ*, i. 144, note.

shield, which rather weighed them down than defended those that bore it."—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, vol. i. p. 155.

Sir Philip was one of her own favoured cavaliers, and his remonstrance flattered her vanity, as open to the suspicion of proceeding from a jealous feeling ; he was tolerated, therefore ; whereas poor Stubbs, who wrote from a manly, patriotic impulse, was doomed to a punishment worthy of the barbarity of savages.

The savage cruelty of which Stubbs was the victim too faithfully reflects the nature of Elizabeth's disposition, and the character of her Government. But among the many dark tragedies that tracked her reign with blood, there is none that equals in cold-blooded atrocity her murderous treatment of Lady Hertford. Her malignant nature is so forcibly illustrated by the melancholy narrative that it claims the reader's earnest attention :—

"What is most singular in the conduct and character of Elizabeth is," says Hume, "that though she determined never to have any heir of her own body, she was not only averse to fix any successor to the Crown, but seems also to have resolved, as far as lay in her power, that no one who had pretensions to the succession, should ever have any heirs or successors. If the exclusion given by the will of Henry VIII. to the posterity of Margaret, Queen of Scotland, was allowed to be valid, the right of the Crown devolved on the house of Suffolk ; and the Lady Catherine Gray, younger sister to the Lady Jane, was now the heir of that family.

"This lady had been married to Lord Herbert, son of the Earl of Pembroke ; but having been divorced from that nobleman she made a private marriage with the Earl of Hertford, son of the Protector ; and her husband, soon after consummation, travelled into France. In a little time she appeared to be pregnant, which so enraged Elizabeth that she threw her into the Tower, and summoned Hertford to appear in order to answer for his misdemeanour. He made no scruple of acknowledging the marriage, which, though concluded without the Queen's consent, was entirely suitable to both parties ; and for this offence he was also committed to the Tower.

"Elizabeth's severity stopped not here : she issued a commission to inquire into the matter ; and as Hertford could not, within the time limited, prove the nuptials by witnesses, the commerce between him and his consort *was declared unlawful, and their posterity illegitimate.*

"They were still detained in custody : but by bribing their keepers, they found means to have further intercourse ; and another child appeared to be the fruit of their commerce. This was a just source of vexation to the Queen : who made a fine of £15,000 be set on Hertford by the Star Chamber, and ordered his confinement to be thenceforth more rigid and severe. *He lay in this condition nine years, till the death of his wife, by freeing Elizabeth from all fears, procured him his liberty.*

"This extreme severity must be accounted for, either by the *unrelenting jealousy of the Queen*, who was afraid lest a pretender to the succession should acquire credit by having issue ; or by *her malignity*, which, with all her great qualities, *made one ingredient in her character*, which led her to envy in others those natural pleasures of love and posterity, of which her own ambition and desire of dominion made her renounce all prospect for herself."⁷

Hallam says that "several interesting letters from Catherine and her uncle to Cecil are among the Lansdown MSS., vol. vi. They cannot be read without indignation at Elizabeth's unfeeling severity. *Sorrow killed this poor young woman—she was never permitted to see her husband again.*"³⁸

It was under the auspices of such a Sovereign—under a Government so despotic, cruel, and corrupt, that ecclesiastical supremacy again became a prerogative of the Crown, and that the Church of the Reformation was re-established in subjection to the State—than which a greater national calamity in its moral, social, and political bearings could scarcely have occurred. Henceforth repression, not encouragement, was to be applied to the spread of truth, and the development of the ennobling principles of the Reformation. It was under such tyrannical and immoral rule, that an infamous system of attach-

³⁷ Hist. Eng., c. xxxviii.

³⁸ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 128.

ing civil disabilities to the profession of religious opinion was commenced, and the groundwork laid for its systematic maturity, in the enactment of an iniquitous penal code—unparalleled in European jurisprudence for the ingenuity of its diabolical atrocity. Thus an irrepressible struggle for civil and religious rights was necessitated, which, though it involved millions of conscientious Englishmen in ruinous suffering, death, or exile—was still bequeathed “from bleeding sire to son,” till it finally eventuated in the glorious triumph of right and justice over the bigotry and the intolerance, the corruptions and the oppressions of Church and State.

As it was, the re-establishment of the connection between the Church and the State under Elizabeth was immediately followed by disastrous consequences to both. Religious and constitutional interests alike suffered from the evil influences that necessarily resulted from such a conjunction. Politically the Church became a mere instrument to subserve whatever policy the Crown, for the time being, favoured, while the Reformation was left to struggle onward, and seek development despite the repressive despotism both united in exercising. Elizabeth and her ravenous courtiers were also quite as willing to plunder the Church, and share whatever spoil remained, as any of the greedy adventurers that preceded them. In this respect, indeed, the “Protestant Queen” *par excellence*, set an example of defiant rapacity that no shameless profligacy in after times could surpass.

The alienation of the estates of bishoprics had been carried to such an extent, that in the beginning of her reign statutes were passed disabling incumbents of ecclesiastical property from granting away their lands except on leases for three lives, or twenty-one years. But, says Hallam, “an unfortunate reservation was introduced in favour of the Crown. *The Queen, therefore, and her courtiers, who obtained grants from her, continued to prey upon their succulent victim.* Few of her

Council imitated the noble disinterestedness of Walsingham, who spent his own estate in her service, and left not sufficient to pay his debts. The documents of that age contain ample proof of their rapacity. Thus Cecil surrounded his mansion-house at Burleigh with estates once belonging to the see of Peterborough. Thus Hatton built his house in Holborn on the Bishop of Ely's garden."³⁹

Cox, Bishop of Ely, ventured to remonstrate with the Queen on the spoliation of his see lands for the benefit of her Lord Chancellor, and refused to sign the conveyance to her, so that she might be in a position to re-convey to her favourite. Exasperated by such honesty, she wrote him the celebrated letter:—

“PROUD PRELATE,

“You know what you were before I made you what you are : if you do not immediately comply with my request [that is, sign the deed conveying to her *for ever* the best part of his See lands] by God I will unfrock you.

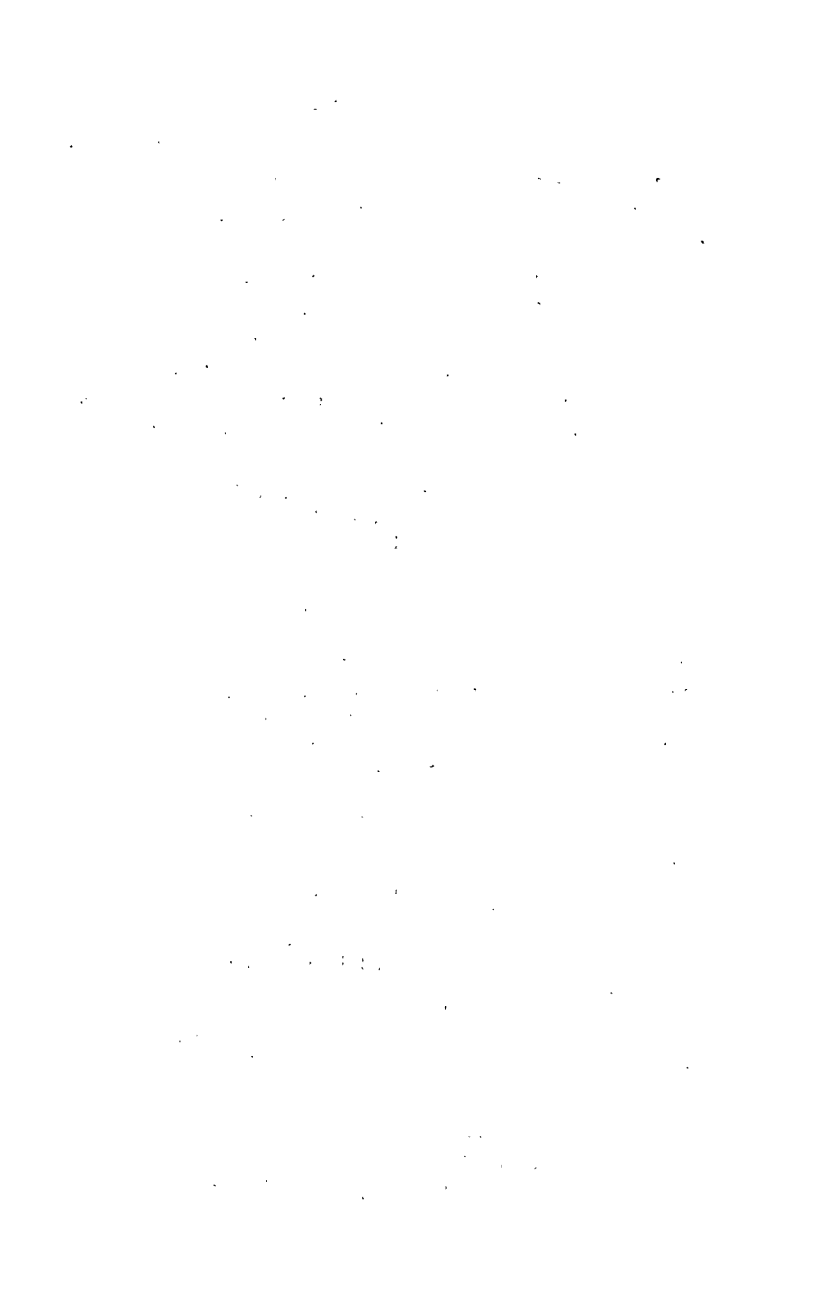
“ELIZABETH.”⁴⁰

³⁹ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 224.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth's imperious, passionate temper must have been something grand and awe-inspiring when fairly aroused. Sir John Harrington, her godson, who has left some most interesting notices of her, says :—“When she smiled, it was a pure sunshine that every one did choose to bask in ; but anon came a storm from a sudden gathering of clouds, and the thunder fell in a wondrous manner on all alike.”—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, vol. i. p. 362.

Sir John says :—“I do remember she *spit* on Sir Matthew's fringed coat, and said, the foole's wit has gone to rags. Heaven spare me such jibinge.”—*Ibid.*, i. 167.

Sir John was sent to Ireland with Essex, and ordered to keep a journal. On the unauthorized return of that nobleman, Sir John accompanied him ; and, in a letter to his cousin, describes his first interview with the Queen, whom, he says, he “feared more than the rebel, Tyrone !” “When I did come into her presence, she chafed much, walked fastly too and fro, looked with discomposure in her visage ; and I remember she caught my girdle when I kneeled to her, and swore *By God's Son* (her favourite and constant oath) I am no Queen ; that man is above me—who gave him command to come here so soon, &c., &c. But I was put out of my



The Bishop was not made of stern enough stuff to resist the despotism of his ecclesiastical superior—his supreme governess; so he signed the deed, and “the names of Hatton Garden and Ely Place (*Mantua vae miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ*) still bear witness to the encroaching Lord Keeper, and the elbowed bishop.”⁴¹ The death of the Bishop took place shortly after, when the Queen *entered into possession of the revenues of the See*, and to secure so unrighteous a source of income *she kept it vacant for the long space of eighteen years!* This was being a nursing mother to the Church with a vengeance!⁴²

trouble, and bid ‘Go home.’ I did not stay to be bidden twice: if all the Irish rebels had been at my heels, I should not have had better speed; for I did now flee from one whom I both loved and feared.”—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, i. 356.

Sir Robert Cecil said that “*she was more than a man, and, in troth, sometime less than a woman.*”

⁴¹ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 224.

⁴² Corruption, indeed, infected every department of the State, and the Queen personally set an example that could not but exercise a most prejudicial influence, as affording an excuse to her rapacious courtiers.

A lawsuit was pending to recover some lands which had been forfeited by Sir James Harrington, for espousing the cause of Richard III. against her grandfather, Henry VII., whereupon Sir John Harrington writes to his son:—“*I will adventure to give her Majesty five hundred pounds, in money, and some pretty jewel or garment, as you shall advise; only praying her Majesty to further my suit with some of her learned counsel, which I pray you to find some proper time to move in. This some hold as a dangerous adventure, but five-and-twenty manors do well warrant my trying it.*”

There is no record of the £500 having been received, but there is every reason to believe that it was paid, for a memorandum recording the New Year’s Gifts presented to the Queen, in 1572, includes—“*Item. A hart of golde, garnished with sparcks of rubyes, perles, dyamondes,*” &c., given by Mr. John Harrington, Esquier; and in 1574, 1576, and 1579, Mr. Harrington is noted as having made other gifts to the Queen.—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, i. 118.

She obtained immense sums in the shape of presents—for grants of monopolies and licenses—by fines arbitrarily imposed—by wardships—by seizing the revenues of vacant sees—by sale of appointments—and, worst of all, by participating in acts of piracy, which she sanctioned. But the

"It was during this period, when the See was keep vacant, that we have," says Hallam, "a petition from Lord Keeper Puckering that she would bestow it on Scambler, Bishop of Norwich, then eighty-eight years old, and notorious for simony, in order that he might give him a lease of part of the lands. These transactions denote the mercenary and rapacious spirit which leavened almost all Elizabeth's courtiers. The Bishops of this reign do not appear, with some distinguished exceptions, to have reflected so much honour on the Established Church *as those who attach a superstitious reverence to the age of the Reformation are apt to conceive*. In the plunder that went forward they took good care of themselves. Charges against them of simony, corruption, covetousness, and especially destruction of their church estates for the benefit of their families, are very common—sometimes, no doubt, unjust, but too frequent to be absolutely without foundation."⁴³

Such were some of the injurious effects that more immediately followed from Elizabeth's usurpation of Church government. Not only was her rule thoroughly corrupt and most detrimental to Church interests, but it was equally reprehensible when regarded in a mere political point of view ; because it displayed all the glaring imperfections of her own character, which we shall see rioting with an imperious vehemence and an augmented virulence that wrought great national evil when she came to deal with those who presumed to have a conscience—who boldly manifested the spirit of Englishmen, and dared maintain their rights and privileges as such.

great disgrace of her reign is, that the avaricious spirit she encouraged—falsely and insidiously styled "*maritime adventure*," and praised as such by her unscrupulous eulogists—led to the establishment of the *African Slave Trade*, a nefarious traffic which was in perfect consistency with the morality that regulated public policy under her rule.

⁴³ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 225.

CHAPTER VI.

On the Development of Protestant Dissent under Queen Elizabeth—A.D. 1558–1566.

"As soon as the news of the Queen's coming to the Crown was known beyond sea," observes Burnet, "all those who had fled thither for shelter did return into England; and those who had lived in corners during the late persecution, now appeared with no small assurance."¹ The exiles returned home in the utmost poverty and distress. They came threadbare home, says Strype, bringing nothing with them but much experience, as well as learning.² These men, who were the real promoters of the Reformation in England, were soon undeceived as to the intentions of the Queen, and found that a change of Government was to bring no relief to honest consciences.³

Elizabeth's first interference with the rights of conscience—though she had then no legal authority as supreme head of the Church—was to issue a proclamation on the 27th December, 1558, *against all innovations in matters of religion*. She enjoined that no other forms of worship should be used than those observed in her own chapel, till Parliament should meet

¹ Hist. Ref., p. 2, b. 3.

² Annals, i. 129.

³ "During the persecutions of Mary's reign, the most eminent Protestant clergymen took refuge in various cities of Germany and Switzerland. They were received by the Calvinists with hospitality and paternal kindness; while the Lutheran divines, a narrow-minded intolerant faction, both neglected and insulted them."—Hallam's *Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 171.

and appoint otherwise, and especially prohibited all preaching without special license.

In the spirit of this despotic and unconstitutional proclamation the whole ecclesiastical legislation of this reign was conducted, and a precedent was established, to be fatally followed in succeeding reigns. A Papal infallibility was assumed by the State. The ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope, indeed, was repudiated—casting out one devil to make room for legion, for the supremacy of the Queen as "*Governess*" of the Church was substituted; and, with her consent, Parliament tinkered creeds, forged shackles for conscience, and enacted pains and penalties that carried desolation into thousands of happy homesteads—consigning innocent victims to the stake, and driving sorrowing multitudes to rend asunder all the tender associations of country and kin, and seek refuge in exile.

The seed of the primitive Christian Church was the blood of its martyrs, shed by barbarous Pagan emperors—the seed of the true Protestantism of the 16th century was likewise blood; but it was the blood of conscientious believers, shed by the modern Paganism of Church and State. A zeal for the extirpation of so-called heresies, and the enforcement of an impossible and undesirable uniformity, was made an excuse for persecuting to the death or exile men whose blameless lives rebuked the scoundrelism that, under the mask of Reformation, grew fat on the plunder of the ancient Church. A shameless depravity ruled at Court, and pervaded every department of the State. The parasites that crawled about, basking in Court favour—the panders who fed the Queen's vanity and ministered to her passions, had all personal interests in the corruptions engendered by the alliance of the Church with the State. In the estimation of the licentiousness of that age, moral Puritanism was even more offensive than doctrinal Puritanism; and an affected zeal for Christian

uniformity was pleaded to justify the persecution of both. A uniformity based on hypocrisy and vice was considered far preferable to the highest development of Christian character, when blended with conscientious dissent !

Parliament met for business on the 25th of January, the Court having taken effective means to secure a favourable majority by directly influencing the elections, as was usual in those days. A proposal to restore to the Crown the tenths and first fruits, which Mary had bestowed upon the Church, was first submitted to the Lords, says Burnet, "to try their affections and dispositions." To deprive the Church of its property was never distasteful to those whose profession of sympathy with the Reformation was only stimulated by the hope of participating in Church plunder. Lords and Commons were then base beyond conception. A Bill embodying the wishes of the Court was hurried through Parliament, and received the royal assent. It not only re-granted the tenths and first fruits to the Crown, but all the impropriated benefices as well, while all the religious houses founded by Mary were suppressed, and the endowments and property conferred on the Crown. The Bishops who were present in the House of Lords alone protested, but an Act was passed giving the nomination of the Bishops to the Queen !

Another Bill originated in the Lords, authorizing the Queen to reserve to herself the lands belonging to bishoprics as they were void, giving the full value in impropriated tithes in lieu of them. It passed the Lords, the Bishops dissenting ; but when it reached the Commons, "there was great opposition to it," says Burnet ; "many had observed that in Edward VI.'s time, under a pretence of giving some endowments to the Crown, *the courtiers got all the Church lands divided amongst themselves* ; so it was believed the use to be made of this would be the robbing of the Church without enriching the Crown." The subserviency of the Commons was, however,

well secured ; so, after protracted debates, the Bill was passed by a majority of 133 to 90.

The supremacy of the Crown was also re-established by a statute, entitled "An Act restoring to the Crown the ancient jurisdiction over the State ecclesiastical, and abolishing all foreign power repugnant to the same."⁴ This is a much more comprehensive statute than that of 26 Hen. VIII. c. i. All the laws passed in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. abolishing Papal power in England were revived, and the legislation in the last reign to the contrary, repealed. It was enacted that the authority of *visiting, correcting, and repressing all things in the Church was for ever annexed to the Crown*; and Bishops and other ecclesiastical persons, and all persons in civil employment, were required not only to swear that they acknowledged *the temporal sovereignty of the Queen*, and would bear her faith and true allegiance, but they were also required to swear that *her supreme governorship extended to all ecclesiastical matters within the realm*—thus swearing that she possessed the authority claimed by the Pope. The penalty of recusancy was forfeiture of office, and disqualification for any employment during life !

But this impious Act went much further ; for it enacted that "the Queen and her successors should have power, by their letters patent under the Great Seal, to assign, name, and authorize, as often as they shall think meet, and for as long as they shall please, persons being natural born subjects, to use, occupy, and exercise, under her and them, all manner of jurisdiction, privileges, and pre-eminences, *touching any spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the realms of England and Ireland, &c., to visit, reform, redress, order, correct, and amend all errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, contempts, offences, and enormities whatsoever.*"

Here were powers assuredly ample enough ; and under this

⁴ 1 Eliz. c. i.

clause the infamous Court of High Commission was established, which became a terrible instrument of tyranny and persecution in the hands of Church and State. It fined or imprisoned its victims, confiscated their property, tortured or murdered them at will, without being amenable to appeal, or subject to any controlling authority save the Crown, whose creation it was, and whose sanguinary instrument it always proved. The infamous career of this detestable tribunal on British soil has placed its memory in odious association with the infernal butcheries of the Spanish Inquisition.

It was provided, however, that the High Commission Court shall "have no power to determine anything to be heresy but what had been adjudged to be so by the authority of the canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils, or any of them ; or by any other General Council, wherein the same was declared heresy by the express and plain words of canonical Scripture ; or *such as shall hereafter be declared to be heresy by the High Court of Parliament, with the assent of the clergy in Convocation.*"

"This Court," says Hume, "was a real *inquisition* ; attended with all the iniquities, as well as the cruelties, inseparable from that tribunal. And, as the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Court was destructive of all law, so its erection was deemed by many a mere usurpation of this imperious Princess ; and had no other foundation than a clause in a statute restoring the supremacy of the Crown, and empowering the Sovereign to appoint Commissioners for exercising that prerogative. But prerogative in general, especially the supremacy, was supposed in that age to involve powers which no law, precedent, or reason could limit and determine."—*Hist. Eng.*, cxli.

The germ of the High Commission Court seems to have been a commission granted by Mary (Feb. 1557) to certain Bishops, and others, to inquire after all heresies, punish per-

sons misbehaving at church, and such as refused to come thither, with full power to proceed as their discretions and consciences should direct them, &c., as related by Burnet ; "but," remarks Hallam, '*the primary model was the Inquisition itself.*'"

Heresy was defined by the statute 2 Hen. IV. c. 15., to be "erroneous opinions, contrary to the faith and blessed determination of the Holy Church," and in those days there was an infallible exponent to declare the mind of Holy Church, whose decisions all Christendom acquiesced in. But Elizabeth's statute declared heresy to be whatever any ecclesiastical judge might determine ; nay, worse—whatever an illiterate majority of Court parasites, fanatics, booby squires, and political adventurers in Parliament assembled, might hereafter declare to be such, with the assent of an equally illiterate and besotted clergy, whose standard of intellectual enlightenment is to be measured by their belief in witchcraft and other grovelling superstitions."⁵

Under this statute, as Blackstone remarked, "a man continued liable to be burnt for what, perhaps, he did not understand to be heresy till the ecclesiastical judges so interpreted the canonical Scriptures."⁶

Such was the comprehensive nature of this Act of Supremacy which made "*the most religious and gracious Queen*"—as the liturgy styled Elizabeth—Governess of the Church, and clothed her with more extensive and despotic power than the Popes ever legally possessed in England. Yet, great as was

⁵ Such were the great State authorities—such the high intellects that manufactured State Creeds and Articles of Belief, which an intolerant despotism sought to impose on the conscience of the nation. But such monuments of human frailty and presumption only now exist to mark how far the tide of bigotry, superstition, and intolerant creedism has receded. They now hang—

"Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery."

⁶ Commentaries, b. iv. c. iv.

the ecclesiastical jurisdiction thus conferred on the Crown, Elizabeth frequently claimed greater latitude than the law allowed, and never hesitated to stretch at pleasure her prerogative far beyond what the statute warranted. A servile Parliament had declared that her father should exercise an unlimited despotism over the consciences of his subjects by enacting that—“*whatsoever his Majesty should enjoin in matters of religion should be obeyed by all his subjects.*” Elizabeth professed “that she did not, nor would she, ever challenge any other authority than her predecessors, King Henry VIII. and Edward VI., used :” yet, throughout her long reign, she exercised a despotic authority in all ecclesiastical matters such as they had never wielded. The whole government of the Church was virtually in her hands ; and no Pope ever claimed to tyrannise more completely over conscience than she did by prescribing this and proscribing that, as she might be swayed by caprice, by prejudice, or by passion.

But, bad as the Act of Supremacy was, the *Act of Uniformity* that followed made matters infinitely worse. It became, in the hands of remorseless intolerance, a fearful scourge to torture the conscientious. The ostensible object of the Act was to enforce “*the uniformity of common prayer and service in the Church, and administration of the Sacraments,*” as if the outward observance of uniformity of doctrine and worship was the one great essential of Christianity. To the maintenance of a false, hypocritical, and vicious semblance of unity every sacred interest was to be sacrificed, and the peace of the country wantonly destroyed. Thus, from the very first, the Church of the Reformation was established in England as “*an organized hypocrisy.*” Obedience, so as to preserve an outward appearance of uniformity, was made the standard of orthodoxy ! Profession, not performance, was made a test of Church communion ! Provided

only that the sepulchre was kept neatly painted and pleasing to the eye, all manner of foulness might revel and riot within!

The spirit that presided over the concoction of this Act was far more Popish than Protestant. Preliminary to the framing of the measure, a committee of divines was appointed by the Queen to revise the liturgy of Edward VI. No concession was to be made in favour of those who earnestly and conscientiously desired to free reformed doctrine and worship from the corruptions and superstitions which still defiled the purity and simplicity of Apostolic teaching; but Romanism, with which the Queen and the Court were deeply tainted, was to be conciliated, and ritualistic observances, fashioned after Jewish and Pagan models, were to be not only encouraged, but enforced.

The passage in Edward's Liturgy—"from the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us," was struck out by the express command of the Queen! "It was proposed," says Burnet, "to have the communion book so contrived that it might not exclude the belief of the corporeal presence," and the committee was commanded "to see that there should be no express definition against it." Therefore, the rubric that explained the reason for kneeling at the sacrament—"that thereby no adoration is intended to any corporeal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood," because "that is only in heaven," which was in Edward's liturgy, was now left out.⁷ Thus, under "the great Protestant Queen"—

⁷ The popular belief is, that Elizabeth had in Mary's reign renounced the doctrine of Transubstantiation—that, in fact, she held true Protestant doctrine, which she never did. A silly story is repeated by Sir Richard Baker, that in Mary's reign "the common net for catching Protestants was the real presence, and this net was used to catch the Lady Elizabeth; for, being asked one time what she thought of the words of Christ, *This is my body*, whether she thought it the true body of Christ that was in the sacrament, it is said that, after some pausing, she thus answered—

"the most religious and gracious Queen"—the Reformation absolutely receded from the point it had reached under Edward VI.—the fact being that Elizabeth's only concern was to retain in her own person the whole power of the State, and with *religious reformation* she never had any sympathy beyond using it as a pretext to gratify her insatiable lust for arbitrary power.

A clause in this Act exhibits in a remarkable manner the deplorable character of the religious legislation of this age. It conferred on the Queen such an unlimited jurisdiction to fabricate new rites and ceremonies, impose them on the nation, and enforce their observance, that religious liberty in England became a perfect farce! It was enacted:—"The Queen is hereby empowered, with the advice of her Commissioners or Metropolitan, to ordain and publish such further ceremonies and rites as may be for the advancement of God's glory and edifying His Church, and the reverence of Christ's holy mysteries and sacraments." This clause was framed at the express desire of the Queen, and so intent was she on possessing the monstrous jurisdiction it confers that, when some murmurs were heard against the objectionable nature and extent of the

" Christ was the word that spake it.
He took the bread and brake it ;
And what the Word did make it,
That I believe, and take it."

"Which," continues Baker, "though it may seem but a slight expression, yet hath it more solidness than at first sight appears."—*Baker's Chronicle*, p. 320.

On such slender grounds does the Protestantism of Elizabeth rest! It is unnecessary to observe that the doggerel imputed to her might just as well have been used by a firm believer in Transubstantiation as by the most advanced Protestant. Elizabeth, however, gave unmistakeable evidence of her Popish belief. Warner relates that when one of her chaplains preached a sermon on Good Friday, *in defence of the real presence*, which without knowing her sentiments he would scarce have ventured on, *she openly gave him thanks for his pains and piety!*—*Eccles. Hist.*, ii. 427.

power the clause granted, she declared to Archbishop Parker she would not give her assent to the Bill unless that clause was retained without any modification whatever, and thus the Bill passed!⁸

"Upon this fatal rock of uniformity in things merely indifferent, in the opinion of the imposers, was the peace of the Church of England split. . . The rigorous pressing of this Act was the occasion of all the mischiefs that befel the Church for above eighty years. What good end could it answer to press men's bodies into the public service without convincing their minds?"⁹

"This statute of uniformity, rigidly enforced, kept the Church of England in a state of convulsion for near a century, and defiled her with the foulest stain which can disgrace a religious body—the blood of dissentients."¹⁰ As Fuller remarks, henceforth one might behold in the Church of England two armies with banners, and that Nonconformity, conceived in King Edward's days, was brought forth and nursed in the days of Elizabeth.

In the exercise of the vast prerogative she now enjoyed, the Queen framed certain "*injunctions*," in accordance with which the discipline, &c., of the Church should be maintained. She then issued several "*Commissions*" for a visitation of all the churches in England, with a view to the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity. The preamble of the commissions, among other things, declared "*that God having set the Queen*

⁸ Warner says:—"Had it not been for this reserve of power, to make what alterations her Majesty thought fit, she told Dr. Parker she would not have passed the Act. This Act, however, and the rigour with which it was executed, occasioned the separation of those who now began to be called Puritans, from their attempting at a purer form of discipline and worship, as they imagined, than that which was yet established."—*Eccles. Hist.*, ii. 417.

⁹ Neal's *Hist. Purit.*, i. 120.

¹⁰ Bogue and Bennet, *Hist. Dissent*, i. 56.

over the nation, she could not render an account of that trust without endeavouring to propagate the true religion with the right way of worshipping God in all her dominions; therefore she, intending to have a general visitation of her whole kingdom, empowered them, or any two of them, to examine the true state of all the churches in the northern parts; to suspend or deprive such clergymen as were unworthy, and to put others into their places; to proceed against such as were obstinate by imprisonment, church censure, or any other legal way."

It appears that at this time there were in all England 9,400 beneficed clergymen. Different accounts are given of the number who were deprived and ejected for Nonconformity. Burnet and others say 199 in all were cast out, while Camden and others say that 243 abandoned their livings, &c., sooner than submit to the unrighteous despotism of the Queen and swear to her Church supremacy as appointed of God! The ejected consisted of 14 Bishops, 3 Bishops elect, 1 Abbot, 4 Priors, 1 Abbess, 12 Deans, 14 Archdeacons, 60 Canons or Prebendaries, 100 Beneficed Clergymen, 15 Heads of Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, and about 20 Doctors in several faculties. But when out of 9,400 beneficed clergymen, only so few as 100 were deprived, it shows how thoroughly the proceedings connected with the Reformation had succeeded in making the clergy base, corrupt, and time-serving—a disgrace to their profession, though worthy of their age.

"Most of the inferior beneficed clergy," says Neal, "kept their places, *as they had done through all the changes of the three last reigns*; and without all question, if the Queen had died, and the old religion had been restored, they would have turned again; but the Bishops and some of the dignified clergy having sworn to the supremacy under King Henry, and renounced it again under Queen Mary, they thought it might reflect a dishonour upon their character to change again, and

therefore they resolved to hold together, and by their weight endeavour to distress the Reformation."¹¹

In the next Parliament another Act was passed to give additional security to the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen. It was enacted that the Oath of Supremacy should be "taken by all persons in holy orders, by all graduates in the universities, lawyers, schoolmasters, and all other officers of any court whatsoever, and by all knights, citizens, and burghesses in Parliament."

At the same time Convocation assembled, and, having received a letter of license from the Queen to review the doctrine and discipline of the Church, they proceeded to consider the articles of religion agreed to in King Edward's reign. These articles were forty-two in number, and, after much discussion, they were so manipulated by combining some and omitting others, that they were reduced to thirty-nine, in which state they have continued to our day.

The first matter however, which led to the persecution of sincere Protestants related to the wearing of Popish vestments during the performance of divine service. The Queen had a theatrical taste for spectacle, and hence her admiration of the pomp and splendour of the Roman worship. Archbishop Parker, who hated Puritanism—whose disposition was harsh and arbitrary—was equally anxious to gratify the Queen and to indulge his own humour by enforcing conformity.

As a rule, the parochial clergy, both in town and country, were averse to wearing the vestments, and the laity were even more so. The laxity of discipline that prevailed in this respect having been represented to the Queen, she was highly irritated, and ordered the Archbishops of Canterbury and York "to confer with the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Commission, and to inquire what diversities there were among the clergy in doctrine, rites, and ceremonies, and to take effectual

¹¹ Hist. Purit., i. 133.

methods that an exact order and uniformity be maintained in all external rites and ceremonies, as by law and good usages are provided for ; and that none hereafter be admitted to any ecclesiastical preferment, but who is well disposed to common order, and shall formally promise to comply with it."¹²

Archbishop Parker cited a number of Puritan clergymen to Lambeth. He admonished and threatened them that they should conform to the habits, and also communicate, kneeling, in wafer-bread, or else be deprived of their preferments. But those who made the question of conformity one of conscience firmly replied, that they could not obey the Archbishop's injunctions, but were prepared to abide by their conscientious convictions of duty, no matter what the event might be.

Among the parties cited were two Oxford divines of great note—men distinguished for learning and zealous for reformation—Dean Sampson, of Christ Church, and Dr. Humphreys, Regius Professor of Divinity, and President of Magdalen College ; and to intimidate others, the Archbishop had them committed to prison. The Queen issued a special mandate, depriving Dean Sampson of his deanery ; and, after remaining in prison for a long time, Dr. Humphreys was released, but not daring to return, he remained for fifteen years in retirement, when he was induced to conform, and became successively Dean of Gloucester and of Westminster. Several other persons were also imprisoned at the same time, and subsequently deprived.

Thus commenced the persecution of Protestants under Elizabeth.

At the instigation of the Archbishop, the Queen now issued a proclamation peremptorily requiring all clergymen to observe uniformity respecting the wearing of vestments, under penalty of being prohibited from preaching and deprived. In

¹² Life of Parker, 154.

London, many of the clergy were averse to wearing the harlequin habits sought to be imposed on them, and the amiably-inclined Bishop Grindal was desirous that conscience should not be constrained in the matter. But the Archbishop was not for conciliatory measures. He partook of the imperious spirit of his tyrannical *Governess*, and would exact conformity at all hazards.

He summoned the whole body of London clergy to appear at Lambeth before the Commissioners, of whom he was the head; and when they attended in court, the Chancellor of the diocese addressed them: "My masters, and ye ministers of London, the Council's pleasure is, that strictly ye keep the unity of apparel, like this man who stands here (pointing to a clergyman duly attired for the occasion), canonically habited with a square cap, a scholar's gown, priest-like, a tippet; and in the church a linen surplice. Ye that will subscribe, write *Volo*; those that will not subscribe, write *Nolo*: be brief—make no words."

An attempt was made by some to address the Commissioners; but the Chancellor, who had received his orders, would brook no words. "Peace, peace!" he cried. "Apparitor, call over the churches, and ye masters answer presently *sub pœna contemptus*."¹³ After enduring severe temptations and trials, and contemplating the sufferings likely to overwhelm their families, should they remain faithful to conscience, sixty-one yielded to persuasions and threatenings, while *thirty-seven* resolutely refused to bow the knee to Baal, among whom, as the Archbishop acknowledged, *were the ablest divines and most accomplished preachers*. But, like all vulgar-minded, time-serving worldlings, whose ambition is to be successful without regard to means, the Archbishop, gloating over the distress certain to fall on the families of those he was about to suspend, said "that he did not doubt, when

¹³ Life of Grindal, 98. Strype's Annals, 463.

they had felt the smart of poverty and want, they would comply, *for the wood is yet but green.*"¹⁴ Such was the cruel reasoning of this wicked persecutor.

The suspended ministers were allowed three weeks to conform; and if they did not within that period become perfectly submissive, they then incurred the penalty of absolute deprivation. Archbishop Parker declared that no terms should now be kept with Nonconformists. "For my part," said he, "since *the Lord is my helper*, I will not fear what man can do to me; nor will I be amused or daunted *fremat mundus ruat cælum.*"¹⁵

He now got the Commissioners to frame injunctions of the most despotic character, by which it was required that *every clergyman who had cure of souls should swear obedience to all the Queen's injunctions and letters patent, no matter what their contents might be*; also, to all letters from the Lords of the Privy Council; to the articles and injunctions of their Metropolitan; to the articles and mandates of their Bishop, Archdeacon, &c.; in fine, to be subject to the entire control of all their superiors, with complete obedience and patience. Such an oath as this was never before exacted from free subjects, under a government pretending to freedom. "It is," says Dr. Warner, "an oath of a most extraordinary nature; and with this unrelenting rigour did the Archbishop carry on the severity against the Puritans, and almost he alone."¹⁶ Hallam says:—

"The repugnance felt by a large part of the Protestant clergy to the ceremonies with which Elizabeth would not consent to dispense, showed itself in irregular transgressions of the uniformity prescribed by statute. Some continued to wear the habits, others laid them aside; the communicants received the sacrament sitting, or standing, or kneeling, according to the minister's taste; some baptised in the font, others in a basin, some with the sign of the cross, others without it.

¹⁴ Life of Parker, 215.

¹⁵ Life, 219.

¹⁶ Eccles. Hist., vol. ii. p. 435.

"The people in London and other towns, siding chiefly with the malcontents, installed such of the clergy as observed the prescribed order. Many of her Bishops readily connived at deviations from ceremonies which they disapproved. Some who had little objection to their use, were against imposing them as necessary. And this opinion, which led to very momentous inferences, began so much to prevail, that we soon find the objections to conformity *more grounded on the unlawfulness of compulsory regulations in the Church prescribed by civil power*, than on any special impropriety in the usages themselves.

"But this principle, which perhaps the scrupulous party did not very fully avow, *was altogether incompatible with the supremacy of the Queen*, of which fairest flower of her prerogative she was abundantly tenacious. One thing was evident, that *the Puritan malcontents were growing every day more numerous, more determined, and more likely to win over the generality of those who sincerely favoured the Protestant cause*.

"There were but two lines to be taken; either to relax and modify the regulations which gave offence, or to enforce a more punctual observance of them. It seems to me far more probable that the former course would have prevented a great deal of that mischief *which the second manifestly aggravated*. For in this early stage the advocates of a simpler ritual had by no means assumed the shape of an embodied faction, which concessions, it must be owned, are not apt to satisfy, but numbered *the most learned and distinguished portion* of the hierarchy.

"Parker stood nearly alone on the other side; but alone more than an equipoise in the balance, through his high station, his judgment in matters of policy, and *his knowledge of the Queen's disposition*."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. i. p. 179.

The resolution was taken to enforce the Queen's injunctions, and, by the most arbitrary measures, to compel uniformity. Accordingly, in every parish persons were appointed whose business it was to act as spies on the clergy, and inform against such as would not conform. To meet the case of those who were neither incumbents nor curates in parishes, but only lecturers, or occasional preachers, the Archbishop revoked all licenses that had been granted to preachers in

his diocese, and required that new ones should be taken out, to receive which it was necessary that the parties bound themselves to conform for the future in all respects. And also, as clergymen who were suspended or deprived in one diocese for Nonconformity, were in the habit of officiating in other dioceses, it was now imperatively enjoined that no clergyman should be allowed to preach without exhibiting letters testimonial from the ordinary where he last served.

"Among the deprived ministers," says Neal, "some betook themselves to the study of physic, and others to secular employments; some went to Scotland, or beyond sea; others got to be chaplains in gentlemen's families; but many who had large families were reduced to beggary."¹⁷

As a consequence of silencing so many zealous and good clergymen, a considerable number of parishes became vacant, and there was no supply provided. Many churches were now shut up. The Bishop of London told Cecil and the Archbishop that he found it impossible to fill the vacant pulpits, there being no preachers; all he could do was to supply the churches by turns, and this caused great dissatisfaction among the people.

The Archbishop, who triumphed in the confusion his intolerance had caused, and whose heart was insensible to the sufferings he was the instrument of inflicting on innocent families, wrote to Cecil, admitting that there were many parishes unserved; that he underwent many hard speeches, and much resistance from the people; but nothing more than this was to be expected; that he had sent his chaplains into the city, to serve in some of the great parishes, but they could not administer the Sacrament, because the officers of the parishes had provided neither *surplice nor wafer-bread*. The people sympathized with the ejected ministers, and such was

¹⁷ Hist. Purit., i. 182.

and other points, but that the Queen's command for universal conformity was so peremptory, he was forced to obey, though, at the same time, he forewarned her that the Puritan ministers would not prove false to what they believed to be their conscientious duty.

"This, however," remarks Hallam, "is not consistent with other passages in his letters, where he appears to importune the Queen to proceed. Her wavering conduct, partly owing to caprice, partly to insincerity, was naturally vexatious to a man of his firm and ardent temper. Possibly he might dissemble a little in writing to Cecil, who was against driving the Puritans to extremities. But, on the review of his whole behaviour, he must be reckoned, and always has been reckoned, the most severe disciplinarian of Elizabeth's first hierarchy, though more violent men came afterwards."—*Constitutional Hist. of Eng.*, i. 179.

While persecution thus raged, an insurrection broke out in the North under the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland; and the Queen, apprehensive for the safety of her throne, issued a long address to the nation, detailing the results of "eleven full years of her reign." She extolled, in strong and glowing language, the prudence, the tranquillity, the success, and the magnanimity that had distinguished her Government in civil affairs, notwithstanding the machinations of foreign conspirators who desired to foment discords and overthrow her throne. The insurrection of "the earls" clearly aimed at her dethronement and the elevation of Mary of Scotland in her place, and this stimulated Elizabeth, now, *for the first time*, in this address to throw herself more trustingly on the Protestant feeling of the country, by identifying herself, as she had never before done, with the Reformation.³

³ This was altogether policy, and, no doubt, sound policy; but it proceeded solely from the exigencies of the political situation, and not from any abandonment of the Queen's Popish predilections, which clung to her to the last.

The only part of this document, however, with which we have any concern, is that portion which relates to the coercion of conscience. It excites, indeed, strange feelings in our minds as we, in the full enjoyment of our liberties, mark the tone of Elizabeth's address, and ponder on the detestable principles it enunciates. In order to maintain a sham, hypocritical, outward uniformity of doctrine and worship, the foulest wrong was to be done and the grossest injustice perpetrated. As supreme governor of the State Ecclesiastical, the guidance and regulation of conscience *externally* was peculiarly within the province of the Queen ; at least this she claimed as within her prerogative, and the extent of liberty she was pleased to declare she would *allow* just went so far as liberty to comply with what she ordered. She says :—

" We know not, nor have any meaning to allow, that any of our subjects should be molested, either by examination or inquisition, in any matter of faith, as long as (*now mark the singular conditions*) they shall profess the Christian faith, not gainsaying the authority of the Holy Scripture or the creed, or for matter of ceremony, or *any other external matter* appertaining to Christian religion, so long as they shall *in their outward conversation show themselves quiet and conformable*, and not manifestly repugnant to the law of the realm which is established for frequentation of divine service."—*Address, 15th Sept. 1570.—Hayne's State Papers, p. 592.*

Was there ever a more extraordinary address issued on a matter of religion? Never—at all events, by a pretending Protestant—were more preposterous and stultifying pretensions advanced to trespass at will within the domain of conscience, and exact an obedience as complete and blind as any Pope ever claimed. Never were principles so conducive to irreligion, so revolting to a healthy moral sense, so repugnant to the rights and privileges of free subjects, avowed with greater explicitness and breadth, or with a more callous

the result despite all the power of the Archbishop and the High Commission Court.

Such was the way in which the good Protestant and most religious Queen Elizabeth distinguished herself by promoting the Reformation! For the vanity of preserving a few Popish vestments, honest men were persecuted, and great discouragement cast on the spread of religion. In a sermon preached before the Queen some years later, Bishop Sandys, in referring to the continuance of those persecutions, declared "that many of her people, especially in the northern parts, perished for want of saving food. *Many there are that hear not a sermon in seven years, I might safely say in seventeen;* their blood will be required at somebody's hands."¹⁸ Severely as the dearth of ministers was felt in cities and towns, the want was far greater and more injurious in the rural parts of distant dioceses where Conformity was rigidly enforced, and whole districts were left without a clergyman to baptize or bury the dead!

In 1566, some of the suspended ministers submitted the merits of their case to the world in a small work, entitled, "*A declaration of the doings of those ministers of God's word and sacraments in the City of London, which have refused to wear the upper apparel, and ministering garments of the Pope's Church.*" On the part of the Court and persecuting prelates, attempts were made to justify their proceedings, to which the Puritans replied with effect, and their publications became so popular—were so eagerly sought after—that the despotism of the Star Chamber was evoked to prohibit their publication, on the convenient allegation that they were seditious libels. Tyrants hate a free press; and as of all tyrants priests are the most sanguinary and remorseless when they have the power, so do they detest, with a peculiar detestation, freedom of discussion, because there is no hatred more malignant and inveterate than that which proceeds from fear.

¹⁸ Life of Grindal, 99.

The Star Chamber, on the 29th June, 1566, issued a decree, *that no person shall print or publish any book against the Queen's injunctions, ordinances, or letters patent, set forth or to be set forth, or against the meaning of them*: that offenders shall forfeit all books, suffer three months' imprisonment, and be prohibited from following their trade any more: and that all stationers, booksellers, and merchants trading in books, shall enter into recognisances to observe this decree, or pay the forfeitures. Such were the principal provisions of this despotic decree, of which it has been forcibly remarked, "that, without entering into the controversy between the Bishops and the Puritans, we may at least venture to affirm that the former did no credit to their cause by this arbitrary restraint of the press. This is an expedient utterly incompatible with the very notion of a free State, and, therefore, ever to be detested by the friends of liberty. And it is an expedient *which can never be of any service to the cause of truth; whatever it may do to error, superstition, or tyranny.*"¹⁹

Thus persecuted, deprived of all redress, prevented, under penalty of sequestrations and imprisonments, from even reasoning and expostulating with their persecutors, and equally prohibited from making their case known through the medium of the Press, a number of the deprived ministers held a solemn consultation with their friends, and after a serious debate concerning the lawfulness and necessity of separating from the State Church, they concluded that as they were not permitted to preach and worship God except in habiliments which they denounced as "*idolatrous gear*," it was their duty to renounce the superstitious observances of the State religion—to separate from it, and assemble together as opportunity offered to worship God in a manner that might not offend against the light of their consciences.²⁰ They also resolved, as they were cut off from the Church, to give up the use of

¹⁹ British Biog., iii. 25.

²⁰ Life of Parker, 241.

its liturgy, which contained some objectionable matter, and adopt the Geneva service-book, as a purer and better form of worship, more consonant with the Scriptures.

Thus commenced the great separation of the Protestant Dissenters from the State Church—an unhappy event, observes Strype, “whereby people of the same country, of the same religion, and of the same judgment in doctrine, parted communions; one part being obliged to go aside into secret houses and chambers, to serve God by themselves, which begot strangeness between neighbours, Christians, and Protestants.”

Though in some respects the event was calamitous—though it was fraught with great sufferings to most of those more immediately concerned in effecting it, yet it was a glorious event for liberty and truth. By its influence the Protestant spirit was preserved in the country, and the successful progress of the Reformation ensured. “At first,” says Neal, “the breach might easily have been made up, but it widened by degrees, the passions of the contending parties increased, till the fire, which for some years was burning under ground, broke out into a civil war, and with unspeakable fury destroyed the constitution both of Church and State.”²¹

But this fiery tempest was necessary to overthrow and destroy the worse than Eastern despotism that had grown up under the Tudors, and threatened to overthrow and blot out what little remained of the common law and prescriptive rights of Englishmen. The profligacy and corruption that irresponsible power necessarily engenders, polluted the Court, the Church, and every department of the State. The whole moral atmosphere was surcharged with miasmatic foulness that overshadowed, infected, and paralyzed the political life of the nation, and nothing short of such a whirlwind as eventuated in the establishment of the Commonwealth could have rent

²¹ Hist Purit., i. 188.

the impenetrable clouds of darkness, and let in glimpses of sunshine and hope.

If then the foundations of society were upheaved, and the Crown and the Church alike fell together before the righteous retribution of awakened justice, to Elizabeth mainly the calamity must be ascribed. The despotism of her long reign of nearly half a century, is something fearful to contemplate. She sowed the wind most industriously, and left to others the reaping of the whirlwind. She strove all in her power to roll back the advancing tide of Reformation on its source, and to thwart or pervert what she could not destroy, by depriving the Reformation of its most ennobling Protestant characteristics. Her great aim was to establish a despotic, corrupt, and necessarily demoralizing Anglo-Romanism, that would have sat like a nightmare on the intellectual and spiritual life of the nation, and made religious belief a thing to be settled and enforced by High Commission Court processes and Star Chamber judgments.

Happily, however, the cruel tyranny of Elizabeth resulted in the full development of Protestant Dissent, which grew the more formidable and enduring because it became inseparably associated with the enlightened assertion of the civil as well as the religious rights of mankind—just as the Church and the State, in unholy alliance, were identified with despotism, until another great revolution became necessary to secure the great fundamentals of constitutional liberty.

It was a noble, a heroic spirit that animated the few faithful, self-sacrificing men who first associated themselves together to assert liberty of conscience on the free basis of Protestant Dissent—at a time, too, when the whole power of the Crown, of Parliament, of the Church, and of the State, was arrayed against them to insult, revile, persecute, and destroy. Deservedly honoured and held in reverence their memory ought to be; for, though in some instances they failed to recognize the

comprehensiveness of their own ennobling principles, still they were the first asserters in our Reformation era of religious liberty—the first who proclaimed enlightened ideas of civil liberty. They planted the grain of mustard seed that grew to be the stately and magnificent tree, under whose glorious shade we can now recline in the enjoyment of an amount of constitutional liberty such as no other people in the world can boast—with none to make us afraid. This we owe to their integrity and devotion, in contemplating which even the arbitrary and uncongenial mind of Hume was touched with a glow of admiration which led him to confess that from them “sprung the most enlightened, liberal, and sublime sentiment”—that “so absolute was the authority of the Crown “that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled, and “was preserved, by the Puritans alone; and it was to this “sect that the English owe the whole freedom of their Constitution!”

CHAPTER VII.

On the Further Relations between Church and State under Elizabeth, and the Persecution that Prevailed until the Organization of the First Congregation of Protestant Dissenters.—A.D. 1566–1572.

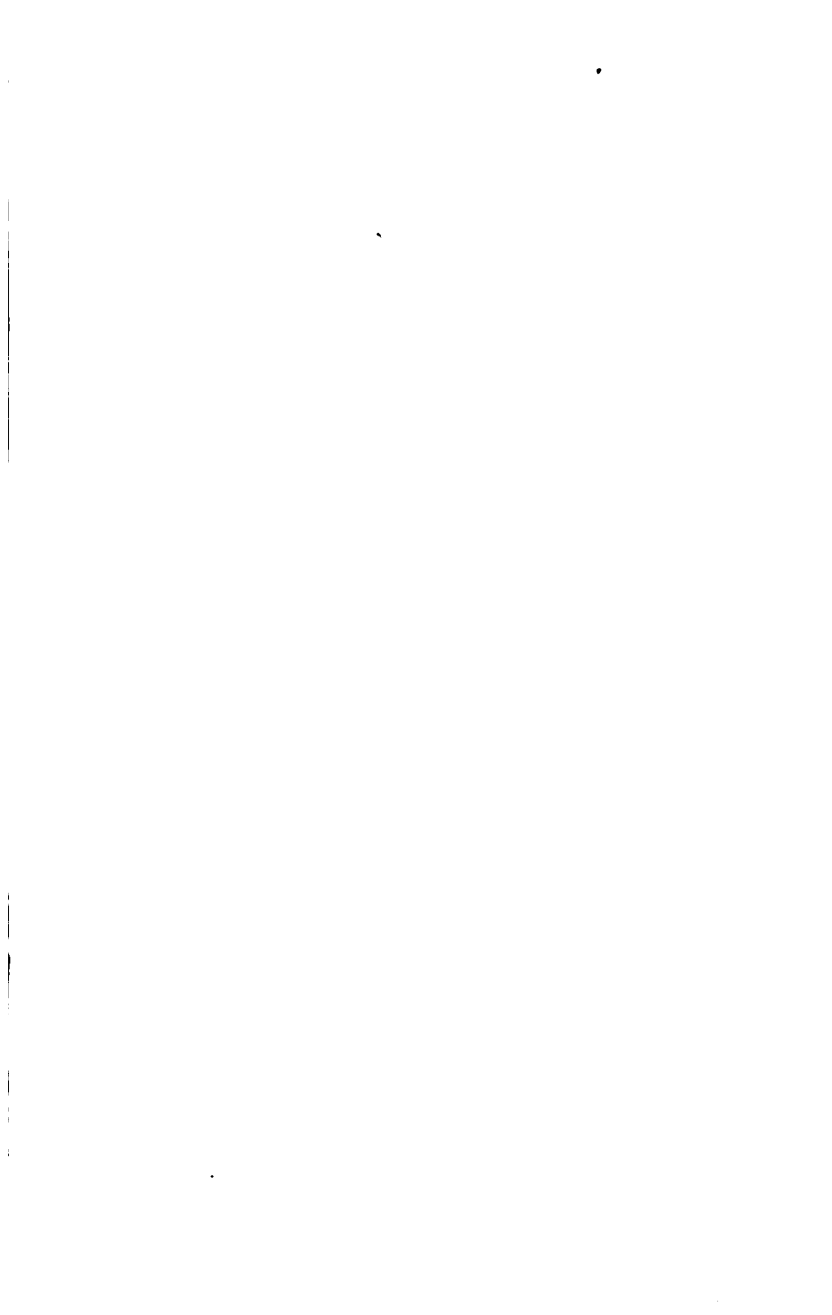
WHEN the London ministers who had been suspended, silenced, or deprived for Nonconformity, resolutely acting in obedience to a noble impulse, renounced communion with the State Church, and assembled, with their lay friends, for the worship of God, it was necessary that their meetings should be held in private. So little liberty of conscience was there allowed by the intolerable despotism of Church and State, that merely assembling together to worship God in private was an offence of such magnitude that it involved all the pains and penalties attachable to recusancy!

The meetings, however, though assembled by stealth, were dearly prized; they soon came to be more frequently held and more numerous attended, until it was hinted abroad that a large body of Nonconformists had renounced the State Church, and associated themselves together for worship. When these tidings reached the Court, there were bitter speeches and insolent threatenings. The Queen, always foremost in evil deeds against free conscience, peremptorily ordered her Ecclesiastical Commissioners to see that the parish churches were regularly attended by the laity, and to have it proclaimed that any citizen of London who frequented a conventicle should, for the first offence, *forfeit the freedom of the city*, and for any subsequent offence abide *whatever punishment she should direct!*

For this arbitrary ukase—unparalleled in English history—there was no law whatever. It was an act of pure, unmitigated despotism, and really worse than any that the “blessed martyr Charles,” committed. It was an audacious stretch of prerogative, “which,” says Warner, “*plainly showed her to be the true daughter of Henry;*” for it was totally unknown—even in the darkest ages of Popery—that an Englishman should be arbitrarily disfranchised by a proclamation of the Sovereign, simply because he failed to attend his parish church!

It was this detestable tyranny that gave consistency and strength to Protestant Dissent; for persecution always makes sincerity more unyielding and steadfast. The meetings for private worship became insufficient to satisfy the spiritual yearnings of the persecuted; and in June, 1567, it was resolved to hold a general assembly of the brethren for communion. This was a bold venture in trying times. As they could obtain no private room large enough for their requirements, they engaged Plumbers’ Hall for the day, under pretence of celebrating a wedding festival. The authorities, however, obtained information respecting the meeting, and the Sheriff’s officers broke into the Hall, and carried off nearly *one hundred men and women in custody!*

The charge against these persons was, that they had absented themselves from their parish churches, and that they had set up separate assemblies for prayer and preaching and ministering the sacraments! A deadly offence truly!—an offence that the despotism that ruled in Church and State could not pardon. After a lengthened hearing, during which the Puritans boldly and ably defended their proceedings, might conquered right, and *twenty-four men and seven women were consigned to prison!* In the dungeons of Bridewell they remained in durance vile for more than *one year*, when the Lords of Council, on Bishop Grindal’s interference, were



touched with sufficient humanity to order their release, with an admonition that they should be more amenable in future.¹ Such cruel persecution, however, was only heaping fuel on the fires of Dissent, which spread rapidly throughout the provinces.

"The edge of the laws that were made against Popish recusants," says Neal, "was turned against Protestant Nonconformists, which, instead of bringing them into the Church, like other methods of severity, drove them farther from it. . . The laws made business for the civilians; many were cited into the spiritual courts, and after long attendance, and great charges, were suspended or deprived; the pursuivant, or messenger of the Court, was paid by the mile; the fees were exorbitant, which the prisoner must satisfy before he was discharged; the method of proceeding was dilatory and vexatious, though they seldom called any witnesses to support the charge, but usually tendered the defendant an oath, to answer the interrogatories of the Court; and if he refused the oath, they examined him without it, and convicted him upon his own confession; if the prisoner was dismissed, he was almost ruined with the costs, and bound in a recognisance to appear again whensoever the Court should require him."—*Neal's Hist. of Puritans*, i. 208–9.

As Puritanism became more general, the activity of church courts increased, and sad examples of persecution were multiplied, causing wide-spread suffering and misery among the very best classes of the population—the intelligent, the moral, the industrious, and the conscientious. "The honest puritans made conscience of not denying anything they were charged with, if it was true, though they might certainly have put the accusers on proof of the charge—nay, most of them thought themselves bound to confess the truth, and bear a public testimony to it, before the civil magistrate, though it was made use of to their disadvantage."²

Archbishop Parker was foremost in carrying out the Queen's persecuting policy. He professed that, at first, he was anxious to accommodate matters by making concessions as to vestments

¹ Life of Grindal, 135.

² Neal's Hist., i. 209.

and other points, but that the Queen's command for universal conformity was so peremptory, he was forced to obey, though, at the same time, he forewarned her that the Puritan ministers would not prove false to what they believed to be their conscientious duty.

"This, however," remarks Hallam, "is not consistent with other passages in his letters, where he appears to importune the Queen to proceed. Her wavering conduct, partly owing to caprice, partly to insincerity, was naturally vexatious to a man of his firm and ardent temper. Possibly he might dissemble a little in writing to Cecil, who was against driving the Puritans to extremities. But, on the review of his whole behaviour, he must be reckoned, and always has been reckoned, the most severe disciplinarian of Elizabeth's first hierarchy, though more violent men came afterwards."—*Constitutional Hist. of Eng.*, i. 179.

While persecution thus raged, an insurrection broke out in the North under the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland; and the Queen, apprehensive for the safety of her throne, issued a long address to the nation, detailing the results of "eleven full years of her reign." She extolled, in strong and glowing language, the prudence, the tranquillity, the success, and the magnanimity that had distinguished her Government in civil affairs, notwithstanding the machinations of foreign conspirators who desired to foment discords and overthrow her throne. The insurrection of "the earls" clearly aimed at her dethronement and the elevation of Mary of Scotland in her place, and this stimulated Elizabeth, now, *for the first time*, in this address to throw herself more trustingly on the Protestant feeling of the country, by identifying herself, as she had never before done, with the Reformation.³

³ This was altogether policy, and, no doubt, sound policy; but it proceeded solely from the exigencies of the political situation, and not from any abandonment of the Queen's Popish predilections, which clung to her to the last.

The only part of this document, however, with which we have any concern, is that portion which relates to the coercion of conscience. It excites, indeed, strange feelings in our minds as we, in the full enjoyment of our liberties, mark the tone of Elizabeth's address, and ponder on the detestable principles it enunciates. In order to maintain a sham, hypocritical, outward uniformity of doctrine and worship, the foulest wrong was to be done and the grossest injustice perpetrated. As supreme governor of the State Ecclesiastical, the guidance and regulation of conscience *externally* was peculiarly within the province of the Queen ; at least this she claimed as within her prerogative, and the extent of liberty she was pleased to declare she would *allow* just went so far as liberty to comply with what she ordered. She says :—

“ We know not, nor have any meaning to allow, that any of our subjects should be molested, either by examination or inquisition, in any matter of faith, as long as (*now mark the singular conditions*) they shall profess the Christian faith, not gainsaying the authority of the Holy Scripture or the creed, or for matter of ceremony, or *any other external matter* appertaining to Christian religion, so long as they shall *in their outward conversation show themselves quiet and conformable*, and not manifestly repugnant to the law of the realm which is established for frequentation of divine service.”—*Address, 15th Sept. 1570.—Hayne's State Papers, p. 592.*

Was there ever a more extraordinary address issued on a matter of religion? Never—at all events, by a pretending Protestant—were more preposterous and stultifying pretensions advanced to trespass at will within the domain of conscience, and exact an obedience as complete and blind as any Pope ever claimed. Never were principles so conducive to irreligion, so revolting to a healthy moral sense, so repugnant to the rights and privileges of free subjects, avowed with greater explicitness and breadth, or with a more callous

effrontery. This address, in fact, is simply a proclamation for the encouragement of vice—the promotion of dissimulation and the spread of immorality. It is a plain declaration that the Queen—insincere herself—desired no religious sincerity in her subjects! All she wanted was to extort, by the dread of iniquitous penalties, a colorable “external” acquiescence in the lawfulness of her usurped authority to lord it over the conscience of the nation. Conform outwardly to her arbitrary dictation as supreme Governess of the Church, and no matter how base and hypocritical such conformity might be—no matter though mind, and conscience, and heart might revolt against the act, and degrade men in their own estimation, still “there shall be no molestation to them by any person by way of examination or inquisition in their consciences for matters of faith.”⁴ What was this but holding before the nation an inducement to act with a time-serving hypocrisy on the most solemn of subjects—an hypocrisy, indeed, in which the Queen herself had been but too well educated, and in which her favourites and courtiers had proved themselves perfect, though profligate proficients.

Is it not marvellous how men of judgment about the Queen—how her own intelligence—failed to discern that, even admitting the legality of her authority to impose creeds, and rites, and ceremonies on those who voluntarily elected to remain under her supremacy in the Church, still that she could have no possible claim on the spiritual allegiance of those who refused to place conscience in her keeping? It was an impiety, an infringement of constitutional right, for her to exercise supremacy as she did over the Established Church; nevertheless, in one sense, that was an affair for the Church itself. But to tyrannically extend her supremacy beyond the boundaries of that Church—to declare that the whole nation should be compelled to comply, sincerely or falsely, with its

⁴ Address, 15th Sept. 1570.—Hayne’s State Papers.

doctrines and worship—that, whether honestly rendered or not, an outward conformity should be extorted under threatenings of pains and penalties, and that there should be no refuge for integrity of conscience, save within the precincts of a prison, or in the basest hypocrisy that made profession “false as dicers’ oaths”—to publish an address of such a scandalous character to the nation, was an outrage on the constitutional inheritance of Englishmen—a flagrant violation of justice, of decency, and of common sense, such as some Popes or Popish Sovereigns may have equalled, but, certainly, such as none ever surpassed.⁵

⁵ Observe into what rank absurdity Protestants fall when an attempt is made to mimic the pretensions of Popery. The Queen wants the Christian faith professed, the authority of Holy Scripture and the creed not to be gainsayed, and perfect obedience rendered to her orders in matters of ceremony, and all other external matters appertaining to the Christian religion and worship.

Now, where was the “Christian faith” to be found in her days? Where, indeed, is it authoritatively and infallibly to be found now? In like manner, what was “Holy Scripture” then?—what is it now? What was the “authority” that was not to be gainsayed? Who was to decide what was “Holy Scripture,” and what Apocryphal? Was it Elizabeth, as supreme Governess?—or Convocation?—or Parliament?—or all three combined? And was *infallibility* claimed for any decision, no matter how arrived at?

Then, if the Queen had authority to decree, by her *ipse dixit*, rites and ceremonies, and punish those who refused to conform, at what point was such despotism to stop? If she could decree a ceremony, could she not equally decree a creed?—and who but a slave in mind and heart will aver that the obedience of subjects was lawfully due to such decrees? It was this despotism of Elizabeth that, when Charles I. sought, in altered times, to practically govern by, brought his head to the block; and, had she ruled in his place, she would have either experienced the same fate, or been sent adrift like the Second James.

The Queen’s address, however, is instructive, in so far as it shows what a muddle monarchs and governments make when they interfere in matters of religion and conscience—matters, save as regards the peace of the commonwealth, with which they have nothing to do. Roman Popery is bad enough, but assuredly Protestant Popery is more disgusting. It is

It is strange to notice the exceedingly crude and hazy notions that then prevailed, even in circles presumably well educated, concerning the high immunities of conscience. Even men who aspired to the character of statesmen failed to perceive the total impossibility of enjoying natural and civil rights, as free subjects should enjoy them, if it was permitted to interfere, in any way, within the sacred domain of conscience. Whether attendance at church was required, or the nominal acceptance of a creed exacted, or an outward compliance with any form of worship enjoined, the rights of conscience were equally invaded and violated. The great rule is—that *whatever makes religious profession a condition precedent to the full and free exercise of the rights and privileges of a subject and a citizen, is politically and morally wrong.*

It must have been some faint conception of the injustice, the absurdity, and the incompatibility of a Popish supremacy in matters of religion—such as the Queen usurped and exercised—existing side by side with any toleration of civil rights and religious liberty, that drove some minds into making a fanciful distinction between bodily and mental conformity ! It was a physical act to attend at church—to bow the head or bend the knee, that did not necessarily carry with it mental compliance, or approbation, or belief. There was an outward or visible sign that might be complied with, without thereby signifying a mental acceptance of the invisible doctrine or thing signified ! The ecclesiastical prerogative of the Crown, it was held, legitimately extended to the enforcement of physical conformity, but that it would be wrong to compel the doing of any act which necessarily implied a mental consent sufficient to note that true Protestantism is based, simply and solely, on *the right of private judgment ; and no “ authority ” in matters of religious belief or worship is admissible, save and except what exclusively appeals to individual conscience.*

This has always been admitted *theoretically*, but *practically* the disgrace of Protestantism has been its denial.

formity. Thus it was considered only physical conformity to attend church, to receive the sacrament of communion kneeling, to bow at the name of Jesus, or to use the sign of the cross in baptism; but to make the receiving of the communion itself a test, or to require subscription to creeds or articles of belief, was held to involve the acknowledgment and profession of a mental conformity and belief, which it would be wrong to extort from any one who really did not believe the doctrines involved.

The simple state of the case was, that every one in England was required to abandon reason, and yield implicit obedience, by conforming to whatever form of worship the caprice of the Queen might be pleased to sanction. Yet it was contended that external conformity did not imply internal relief—that people might really believe as they pleased; but as the law required external conformity, it was the duty of subjects to obey the law, and, by enforcing the observance of the law, conscience was not persecuted. *By a wretched sophism*, says Froude, *it was argued that the rights of conscience were not violated, because no one was punished for his belief, but for his Nonconformity!*

It is surely unnecessary to observe, that such fanciful distinctions and sophistry are more worthy of Salamanca or the Vatican, than consistent with Protestant reasoning, truth, or principle. They serve, however, to illustrate the transition state of opinion, when the mind of England was escaping from its swaddling-clothes.

Among the accepted truisms of that day, it was not held that a good end can never justify bad means—that what is wrong in the inception can never become right, no matter what transitions it may pass through—and that, although expediency may largely extenuate, it can never ethically justify, studied dissimulation and hypocrisy. Fertile crops spring from corruption, but wise men do not sow rotten seed.

On the assembling of Parliament in 1571—the Puritan element being unusually strong in the Commons, but kept in subjection by the unscrupulous abuse of the Queen's prerogative—it was contended by a venerable and liberal gentleman, Mr. Strickland, who desired to reform church abuses, that to exact physical conformity under penalties of fines was really no injustice! "It was," he said, "no straitening of their consciences, but a charge or loss of goods, if they could not vouchsafe to be, as they should be, good men and true Christians!" True Christianity, in those days, consisted in little more than boundless profession.

A Mr. Dalton declared with a profound philosophy that, "the matters of conscience did not concern law makers; neither were they to regard the error, curiosity, or stiff-neckedness of the evil, ignorant, or froward persons! For be it they did proceed orderly to the discharge of their own consciences in making the law, let them care for the rest whom it behoveth."⁶

A Mr. Aglionby objected to forcing men to receive the communion. He argued:—

"That it was not to enforce conscience to come to the Church, for that it is public, and tendereth but to prove a man a Christian, is tolerable and convenient; and not to come to Church may make a man seem irreligious, and so no man; for that by religion only a man is known and discerned from brute beasts, and this is to be judged by the outward show. But the conscience of man is eternal, invisible, and not in the power of the greatest monarchy in the world, in any limits to be straitened, in any bounds to be contained, nor with any policy of man, if once decayed, to be again raised."⁷—*D'Ewes' Journal*, p. 177.

⁶ D'Ewes' Journal, p. 161.

⁷ In the debates of the Parliaments held during this reign, we find the germs of some great truths dimly shadowed forth. A spirit of sturdy independence was occasionally manifested by a few individual members that excites our admiration, considering the gross intimidations exercised by the Queen, and the repressive influences that were generally at work.

Parliament, however, in that age was not to be reasoned into toleration, though there was a large and an increasing party anxious to redress Church abuses, in the hope that the Puritans would be conciliated, and the work of further Reformation go quietly on. Mr. Strickland, a leading member of this party, brought under the notice of the House some of the glaring and tangible abuses that floated on the surface of the Church system, and introduced a Bill to redress them. But the Treasurer of the Queen's household interposed, and declared "that all such matters were to be referred to the Queen, and that it was not for them to meddle with the Royal prerogative!" The Queen, indeed, was so irritated with Mr. Strickland, that she had him summoned before the Council, severely reprimanded, and forbidden to attend in his place in Parliament. Such an outrageous act of despotism created a deep ferment, and public excitement increasing, the Queen, who was careful not to push prerogative so far as to jeopardise her popularity, considered it politic to give way and withdraw the prohibition. But no abuses were removed, nor grievances redressed.

This Parliament, however, was slavish enough, and accomplished a work that effectually circumscribed the Church of England within the narrow boundaries of a sect, and withdrew whatever latitude for spiritual independence was then allowed within its constitution. Nine years before, in 1562, Convocation had framed Thirty-nine Articles out of the Forty-two of Edward VI., but Parliament then refused to pass an Act sanctioning them, and they had remained legally inoperative ever since. Now, however, it was deemed expedient to have them made part of the statute law of the land, and compel their enforcement by pains and penalties.

Accordingly, a Bill was brought in and passed for that purpose.⁸ It is entitled, "An Act for Reformation of Disorders

⁸ 13 Eliz. c. 12.

in the Ministers of the Church," and requires that all incumbents should subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles before their respective Bishops—that any clergyman who maintained any doctrine repugnant to any of the said Articles could be deprived by his Bishop; and that no one should be admitted to any cure of souls unless he subscribed the Articles, and declared his unfeigned assent thereto.

It was intended by Parliament that a concession should be made in favour of the Puritan ministers, by enacting that assent should *only* be required to the Articles concerning faith, and not to those that related to discipline. This was not pleasing to Archbishop Parker, who complained of the omission to Mr. Wentworth, a sturdy member of the Commons, who, in the following Parliament, repeated the conversation to the House.

"I was, among others," he said, "the last Parliament, sent for unto the Archbishop of Canterbury, for the articles of religion that then passed this House. He asked me 'why we did put out of the book the Articles for the homilies, consecration of Bishops, and such like?' 'Surely, sir,' said I, 'because we were so occupied in other matters that we had no time to examine them how they agreed with the word of God.' 'What,' said he, 'surely you mistake the matter; you will refer yourselves wholly to us therein?' 'No; by the faith I bear to God,' said I, 'we will pass nothing before we understand what it is; for that were but to make you Popes. Make you Popes who list,' said I, 'for we will make you none.' And, sure, Mr. Speaker, the speech seemed to me to be a Pope-like speech, and I fear lest our Bishops do attribute this of the Pope's canons unto themselves: *Papa non potest errare!*"—*D'Ewes' Journal*, p. 239. *Strype's Life of Parker*, p. 394.

Hallam remarks that "the intrepid assertion of the right of private judgment on one side, and the pretension to something like infallibility on the other, which have been for more than two centuries since so incessantly repeated, are here curiously brought into contrast. As to the reservation itself,

obliquely insinuated rather than expressed in this statute, it proved of little practical importance, the Bishops having always exacted a subscription to the whole 'Thirty-nine Articles.'"⁹

Had it been so, says Neal, and "if the Queen and the Bishops had governed themselves accordingly, *the separation had been stifled in its infancy*; for there was hardly a Puritan in England that refused subscription to the doctrinal articles."¹⁰

However, the Church was now truly established by law, and its articles of faith prescribed for it by a measure, says Froude, "which went far beyond the most extravagant pretensions of the Church of Rome in laying a yoke upon the conscience. *The heavy chains descended.* The faith of England, which, but for this fatal step, might have expanded with the growth of the nation, was hardened into unchanging formulas, and intellect was condemned to make its further progress unsanctified by religion, the enemy of the Church, instead of being its handmaid."¹¹

At the meeting of Convocation which assembled in 1571, a petition was presented on behalf of the deprived ministers. The member who presented it, in supporting its prayer, said—"If a goodly minister omit but the least ceremony, for conscience' sake, *he is immediately indicted, deprived, cast into prison, and his goods wasted and destroyed; he is kept from his wife and children, and at last excommunicated.* We, therefore, beseech your fatherhoods to pity our case, and take from us these stumbling-blocks." But there was no disposition to deal rationally or mercifully with men who presumed to have a conscience; hence, instead of removing stumbling-blocks, more were fashioned and laid in the way. More severe canons of discipline were framed to be enforced with the view of driving all Puritans out of the Church. It was resolved

⁹ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 193.

¹⁰ Hist. Purit., i. 217.

¹¹ Hist. of Eng., vol. x. p. 194.

that the Bishops should call in all licenses for preaching, and issue new ones to those only who subscribed all the articles of faith, together with the articles affecting discipline, while any one who refused to subscribe, or preached contrary doctrine, should be excommunicated !

Orders were also sent to all churchwardens "not to suffer any to read, pray, preach, or minister the sacraments in any churches, chapels, or private places without a new license from the Queen, or the Archbishop, or the Bishop of the diocese, to be dated since May, 1571." Thus, all that blind bigotry and rabid intolerance could do to deprive the Church of its greatest strength was done. A course of barbarous persecution was recklessly and wantonly followed, that drove its ablest and best ministers outside its pale, and compelled them either to abandon their ministry altogether, or to assemble and act on an independent basis.

Archbishop Parker was zealous for persecution. Associating with himself the Bishops of Winchester and Ely, he summoned the principal clergy of both provinces who were averse to the proceedings for establishing uniformity, and plainly told them "that if they intended to continue in their ministry, they must take out new licenses and subscribe the articles framed according to the recent Act; otherwise, they might resign quietly or be deprived." Grindal, however, who was of a mild and tolerant disposition if he had been permitted, declared that he could not sanction Parker's proceedings if he went to such an extreme as suspension and deprivation. Whereupon Parker wrote:—

"He thought it high time to set about it; and, however, the world may judge, he would serve God *and his prince*, and put her laws in execution; that Grindal was too timorous, there being no danger of a præmunire; that the Queen was content her late book of articles (though it had not the broad seal) should be prosecuted:—but Grindal being now at York wisely declined the affair."—*Strype's Life of Grindal*, p. 166.

Parker would not be diverted from his cruel purpose; he cited the chief Puritans about London to Lambeth, all of whom, says Neal, "being willing to live peaceably, *offered to subscribe the articles of religion as far as concerned the doctrine and sacraments only*, and the book of Common Prayer, as far as it tended to edification, it being acknowledged on all hands that there were some imperfections in it; but they prayed, with respect to the apparel, that neither party might condemn the other, but that those that wore them, and those that did not, might live in unity and concord."¹²

The Archbishop, however, would have no conciliation. He would listen to no compromise. He told them peremptorily, "that they must come up to the standard of the Queen's injunctions, or be deprived."¹³ Accordingly, almost all were deprived, and driven forth from a Church that was unworthy of them.

It was by such suicidal action on the part of the supreme "Governess" of the Church and her subordinates, that Protestant Dissent was stimulated into healthy and vigorous development, and was so matured as to become a great and beneficent power in the land.

But now the controversy between the Church and the Puritans began to assume a new phase. It had been gradually drifting into new channels. The wearing of vestments, the compliance with rites, or the observance of ceremonies—matters in themselves of comparative indifference—came no longer to be considered the main points in dispute. The whole organization of the Church, as an establishment pretending to be based on Scriptural warranty, was critically examined and boldly condemned. Great constitutional topics concerning the relative duties and reciprocal obligations of rulers and subjects were also imported into the discussion, and the lawfulness of the Queen's supremacy was itself called in question, and most properly impeached.

¹² Hist. of Purit., i. 226.

¹³ Strype's Parker, p. 326.

Thomas Cartwright, fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, a Divinity Professor; a profound scholar, very popular as a preacher, ambitious and courageous, was the able and zealous apostle who gave a new development to Puritan controversy—who boldly carried the war into the enemy's camp, and enunciated great principles of civil and religious liberty, the practical blessings of which we now happily enjoy. Hallam says :—

“The first period in the history of Puritanism includes the time from the Queen's accession in 1570, during which the retention of superstitious ceremonies in the Church had been the sole avowed ground of complaint.

“But *when these obnoxious rites came to be enforced with unsparing rigour, and even those who voluntarily renounced the temporal advantages of the Establishment were hunted from their private conventicles*, they began to consider the national system of ecclesiastical regimen as itself in fault, and to transfer to the institutions of Episcopacy that dislike which they felt for some of the Prelates.

“The ostensible founder of this new school (though probably its tenets were by no means new to many of the sect) was Thomas Cartwright. . . He began about 1570 to inculcate the unlawfulness of any form of Church Government, except what the Apostles had instituted, the Presbyterian. A deserved reputation for virtue, learning, and acuteness, an ardent zeal, an inflexible self-confidence, a vigorous, rude, and arrogant style, marked him for a formidable leader of a religious faction.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 185.

Cartwright's views were in many respects extreme and impracticable. His theory of Church and State was not a whit more consistent with the existence of civil and religious liberty, than was the practice of Elizabeth and her prelates. In his *Defence of the Admonition*, while he very properly repudiates the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion, he, at the same time, elevates the ecclesiastical above the civil power. He says :—

"Church matters ought ordinarily to be handled by Church officers. The principal direction of them is by God's ordinance committed to the ministers of the Church and to the ecclesiastical governors. As these meddle not with the making of civil laws, so the civil magistrate ought not to ordain ceremonies, or determine controversies in the Church, as long as they do not intrench upon the temporal authority." But then he says of civil magistrates, that, "as they be nurses, so they be servants unto the Church; and as they rule in the Church, so they must remember to submit themselves unto the Church, *to submit their sceptres, to throw down their crowns before the Church, yea, as the prophet speaketh, to lick the dust off the feet of the Church.*"

But apart from such wild, incoherent, and arrogant pretensions, which a Hildebrand could not excel, Cartwright's influence in giving a political, a constitutional tone to the controversy, was undoubtedly, most useful.¹⁴ His principal opponent was Whitgift, who subsequently succeeded Parker, and equalled him as a persecutor. Between such combatants, the controversy not only excited great interest at Court, but disturbed the whole nation. Those in power, however, were not content to employ literary weapons only. Cartwright, says the elder D'Israeli, "was to be confuted by other means. The University refused him his degree of D.D., condemned the lecturer to silence, and finally performed that last feeble act of power, expulsion. In a heart already alienated from the established authorities, this could only envenom a bitter spirit."¹⁵

¹⁴ Respecting Cartwright's *Admonition*, it is observed by Hallam—"In this treatise such a hardy spirit of innovation was displayed, such schemes of ecclesiastical policy, so novel and extraordinary, were developed, that it made a most important era in the contest, and rendered its termination far more improbable. *The hour for liberal concession had been suffered to pass away*; the Archbishop's intolerant temper had taught men to question the authority that oppressed them, till the battle was no longer to be fought for a tippet or a surplice, but for the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy, interwoven, as it was, with the temporal constitution of England."—*Const. Hist. of Eng.* vol. i. p. 185.

¹⁵ Quarrels of Authors, art.—Martin Mar-Prelate.

While the controversy was thus proceeding with much animosity on both sides, Parliament assembled in May, 1572, and the session was opened by a speech from the Lord Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, who, "by her Majesty's commandment," said :—

"That many of the laudable rights and ceremonies of the Church, or pertaining to the ministers of the same, agreed upon by common consent, the very ornaments of our religion, are very ill kept, or at least have lost a great part of their estimation. And here, through the many faults for want of discipline, I remember you of one particular matter of great moment. How cometh it to pass that the common people in the country universally come so seldom to Common Prayer and Divine Service, and when they do come, be many times so vainly occupied there, or at least do not there as they should, but for want of discipline ?

"And because the proceedings of matters of discipline and doctrine do chiefly concern my Lords the Bishops, both for their understanding and ecclesiastical function, therefore the Queen's highness looketh that they being called together here in parliament, should take the chiefest care to confer and consult of those matters. And if in their conference they found it behooful to have any temporal Acts made for the amending and reforming of any of these lacks, that then they will exhibit it here in Parliament to be considered upon, and so *Gladius gladium juvabit*, as before time hath been used ; *presuming always that all laws and ordinances for this matter of doctrine and discipline be uniform, and so one sort throughout the whole realm.*"—*D'Ewes' Journal*, p. 192.

It was for the purpose of enforcing a mockery of uniformity that the Queen promised, by the mouth of her Lord Keeper, that the civil sword was ready to support the ecclesiastical, and aid in the execution of the bloody behests of a dominant intolerant faction with whom religion, for the most part, was a false pretence. The Puritans, however, fortunately had numerous friends in the Commons, and there were so many palpable grievances unredressed that no disposition

existed to frame additional penal laws, or to strengthen in any way the hands of the persecuting prelates. On the contrary, indeed, with a view to regulate the observance of rites and ceremonies, two Bills were introduced, the effect of which would have been to mitigate, in some degree, the oppressions the Puritans complained of so bitterly.

As it was not supposed that these Bills would give deep offence to the Queen, they were favourably received by the Commons, and passed through all their stages with scarcely any opposition. This alarmed the Bishops, and excited the resentment of the Queen, who regarded such interference with religious matters as an encroachment on her prerogative. She sent for the Speaker, and commanded him to inform the Commons that she would not permit them to entertain any Bills concerning religion which had not been first considered and approved of by the Bishops, and presented to the House with her sanction. At the same time she ordered the two Bills to be sent to her, which was done with a humiliating supplication that, if she did not approve of them, she would not conceive an ill opinion of the House, or of the parties by whom they had been supported. She replied, that she utterly disliked the Bills, and would not return them!¹⁶

This was such a stretch of despotic authority—such an assumption of high prerogative, as even her tyrannical father had never ventured to exercise. It struck at the very root of Parliamentary independence, and was utterly inconsistent with the legitimate working of any system of constitutional representation. But in all such contests with the Crown during this reign, when the time for bold and decisive action arrived the Commons waxed faint of heart—receded from the impregnable constitutional position they generally at first occupied, and meanly succumbed to the usurpations of the Crown. Occasionally, indeed, a spirit of independence was

¹⁶ D'Ewes' Journal, p. 213.

manifested by individual members that appeared likely to extend and become powerful enough to vindicate the constitutional functions of Parliament, and maintain the essential privileges of its members ; but, no sooner would the Queen frown and threaten, than the spirit of the House evaporated, or subsided into the most abject servility, while peace was generally made with the Crown by sending the free-spoken members to learn lessons of docility by a sojourn in the Tower.

On the present occasion the attempt made to mitigate the severity of the penal laws against Nonconformity not only failed, but that very failure incited the prelates more rigorously to enforce the Act that authorized them to require subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, together with the Queen's injunctions. According to Strype, one hundred learned and pious clergymen were deprived this year and cast forth on the world, because they refused to play the part of hypocrites by subscribing what they did not conscientiously approve of. All that was demanded of them was an outward conformity—their subscription, with any verbal equivocations or mental reservation that they might grasp at as a salve for conscience ; but they resolutely refused to act dishonestly, and bitter persecution was their lot.¹⁷ Neal relates that :—

“ The University of Cambridge was a nest of Puritans ; many of the graduates were disaffected to the discipline of the Church . . . but Dr. Whitgift, the Vice-Chancellor, watched them narrowly, and kept them under. The Rev. Mr. Clarke, in one of his sermons at St. Mary's, had said that ‘there ought to be a parity among the ministers in the Church ; and that the hierarchical orders of Archbishops, Patriarchs, Metropolitans, &c., were introduced into the Church by Satan !’ For which he was summoned before the Vice-Chancellor and heads of Colleges, and refusing to recant, was expelled the University.

“ Clarke wrote a handsome Latin apology to Lord Burleigh,

¹⁷ Strype's Annals, p. 187.

their present Chancellor, in which he confesses that it was his opinion that the Church of England might be brought nearer to the Apostolic character or likeness ; but that this must not be said either in the pulpit or desk, under the severest penalties. The Chancellor, knowing him to be a good scholar, and in consideration that he had been hardly dealt with, interceded for him, but to no purpose. Mr. Browning, Mr. Deering, and others met with the like usage."—*Hist. of Puritans*, vol. i. p. 230.

About this time the Puritans generally began to entirely abandon all hope of reconciliation with the Church. Instead of broad and comprehensive views of Christianity actuating its rulers, the reverse was daily becoming more painfully apparent. A narrow and confined spirit, deeply tinctured with bigotry and intolerance, interpreted Christianity to be little more than outward conformity to the State creed, and compliance with the rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Queen. Within the pale of the State Church there was no abiding-place for earnest, zealous, thoughtful, conscientious men, who made Scripture alone their standard of authority, and refused to abjectly yield their minds to the intolerable yoke of human impositions. Things, in fact, had arrived at such a stage that there was no Christian freedom, save in unqualified and resolute Dissent. The Puritans had ample and bitter experience that to acknowledge the rights of conscience the Queen regarded as inconsistent with the monstrous supremacy of her prerogative ; while the Bishops, animated by the intolerant spirit of ascendancy, would not, if they could possibly avoid it, permit the manifestation of any independent convictions that asserted mental and spiritual liberty. All should subscribe and conform, or all should be condemned and punished !

It is true that the religious Reformation in England, as elsewhere, was ostensibly and ostentatiously based on the assumed incontestibility of the right of private judgment ; but in every country where a connection between Church and State

was established, this theoretical basis was virtually ignored, for the only right of private judgment that was practically acknowledged was a right to express agreement with the dominant ecclesiastical sect. Disagreement—Nonconformity invariably evoked pains and penalties. Hence a State Church, whether under a Popish or a Protestant regime, has always proved hostile to the right of private judgment—has always punished with civil disabilities conscientious dissent from creeds of State manufacture, and consequently has always manifested a persistent enmity to intellectual progress, and to the enlightened development of constitutional liberty.

Cast off, proscribed, and persecuted by the State Church, the Puritans were driven to adopt the resolution no longer to exhaust patience and torture hope by vain appeals to the Christian forbearance of unchristian prelates, or in soliciting justice from an imperious, selfish, and cruel Sovereign, to whose despotic disposition justice was an attribute as little known as mercy. Nonconformity was thus compelled to assume a new phase. The idea so long and ardently cherished by the Evangelical Protestantism of the day—that the Church might be induced to widen its boundaries by reasonable concessions, so as to embrace within its pale all Protestants who agreed with its main doctrines, was now relinquished with pain, while the belief became general that the only way to obtain a redress of grievances that held out any prospect of success, was the resolute assertion by Nonconformists of their constitutional rights as Englishmen.

Thus Nonconformity, which at first was entirely of a religious character, was necessitated to become political. Henceforth, in its enlightened policy and action, it is thoroughly identified in history with the advocacy of constitutional rights, and the realisation of civil and religious liberty.

Forced into this position by the reckless despotism of

Elizabeth, and the blind intolerance of her prelates, it mainly devolved on Nonconformists to keep alive the flickering flame of British liberty, which the despotism of the Crown and the corruptions of the Court, under the Stuarts, threatened to extinguish.

From this period, indeed, notwithstanding the temporary aberrations of a fanatical and intolerant sectarianism that occasionally disgraced the cause, Nonconformity is identical in its history with all that is noble and good in the progress of the nation.

To public opinion, and to Parliament, the Nonconformists now resolved to appeal in vindication of their outraged rights. An able statement of their grievances, entitled *An Admonition to the Parliament*, was drawn up by two ministers, the Revds. Messrs. Field and Wilcox, and adopted by their brethren. They presented it themselves in the form of a petition to both Houses; but so little were the rights of the subject then regarded, that, at the instigation of the Bishops, Mr. Field and Mr. Wilcox, for daring to petition for a redress of grievances, were committed to Newgate on the 2nd of October, 1572.

Such a violent exercise of authority, however, only made matters worse, for the *Admonition*, which had been secretly printed, but not published, gained such notoriety by the imprisonment of its authors, that copies were eagerly sought after. Editions, secretly printed, were extensively circulated over the whole country, and popular sympathy was thus enlisted on the side of the persecuted.

On this occasion it was that Mr. Cartwright, who had returned from abroad, published his *Second Admonition*, with an humble petition to both Houses of Parliament praying for relief. The prisoners Field and Wilcox also sent an elegant apology in Latin to Lord Burghley, who was favourable to the Nonconformists as a statesman, but, as a courtier, was

opposed to taking any step that would jeopardise his own interests.¹⁸

The prisoners also solicited the intercession of the Earl of Leicester, who made a great profession of religion, and affected to patronise the Puritans. They complained to him of the illegal violence of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who arbitrarily detained them in prison beyond the time limited by statute. They represented—

“That they had been condemned, according to the Act of Uniformity, to a year’s imprisonment, which they had now suffered patiently in the common gaol of Newgate, besides four months’ close imprisonment before their conviction, which they apprehended to be contrary to law; that by this means they and their poor wives and children were utterly impoverished; their health very much impaired, by the unwholesome savour of the place and the cold weather; and that they were like to suffer yet greater extremities; they therefore humbly beseech his Lordship for the tender mercies of God, and in consideration of their poor wives and children, to be a means to the most honorable Privy Council,

¹⁸ Cecil, Lord Burghley, was the ablest statesman of his day, but unprincipled and corrupt. Collier notices that during Mary’s reign, whether yielding to the pressure of ambition or terror, he conformed to the Roman Catholic religion as Elizabeth did.—*Eccles. Hist.*, v. 2, p. 409. Nares, in his *Life of Burghley*, has proved that he confessed and attended mass. He quotes from a certificate in the handwriting of his steward, and indorsed by himself:—“The Wimbledon Easter Books, 1556.” “*The names of them that dwelleth in the pariche of Wimbletown, that was confessed and resaved the sacrament of the altre. My Master, Sir Wilyem Cecil, and my Lady Mildreade his wife, &c.*” As already noted, Cecil had secured to himself a lion’s share of Church plunder. Although a layman, so scandalous was the corruption of the promoters of reformation, that he obtained for himself the rectory of Wimbledon in Edward’s reign, and occupied the glebe house and lands!

There appears to be no doubt that Burghley was anxious to serve the Nonconformists, but, as Neal observes, “he had not courage to intermeddle with an affair which might embroil him with the Queen, or at least with her ecclesiastical commissioners, though it is well known he had a good will to the cause.”—*Hist. Purit.*, i. 233.

that they may be enlarged ; or, if that could not be obtained, that they might be confined in a more wholesome prison."

But instead of merciful consideration for unmerited sufferings, the Bishops clamorously besought the Queen and Council to forge additional chains for conscience, and adopt persecuting measures of greater severity. Dr. Sandys, Bishop of London, pathetically appealed to the Lord Treasurer and Council for further aid to crush Nonconformity.

"The city," he says, "will never be quiet till these authors of sedition, who are now esteemed as gods, as Field, Wilcox, Cartwright, and others, be far removed from the city ; the people resort to them, as in Popery they were wont to run on pilgrimages ; if these idols, who are honoured as saints, were removed from hence, their honour would fall into the dust, and they would be taken for blocks as they are. A sharp letter from her Majesty would cut the courage of these men. Good my Lords, for the love you bear to the Church of Christ, resist the tumultuous enterprises of these new-fangled fellows."¹⁹

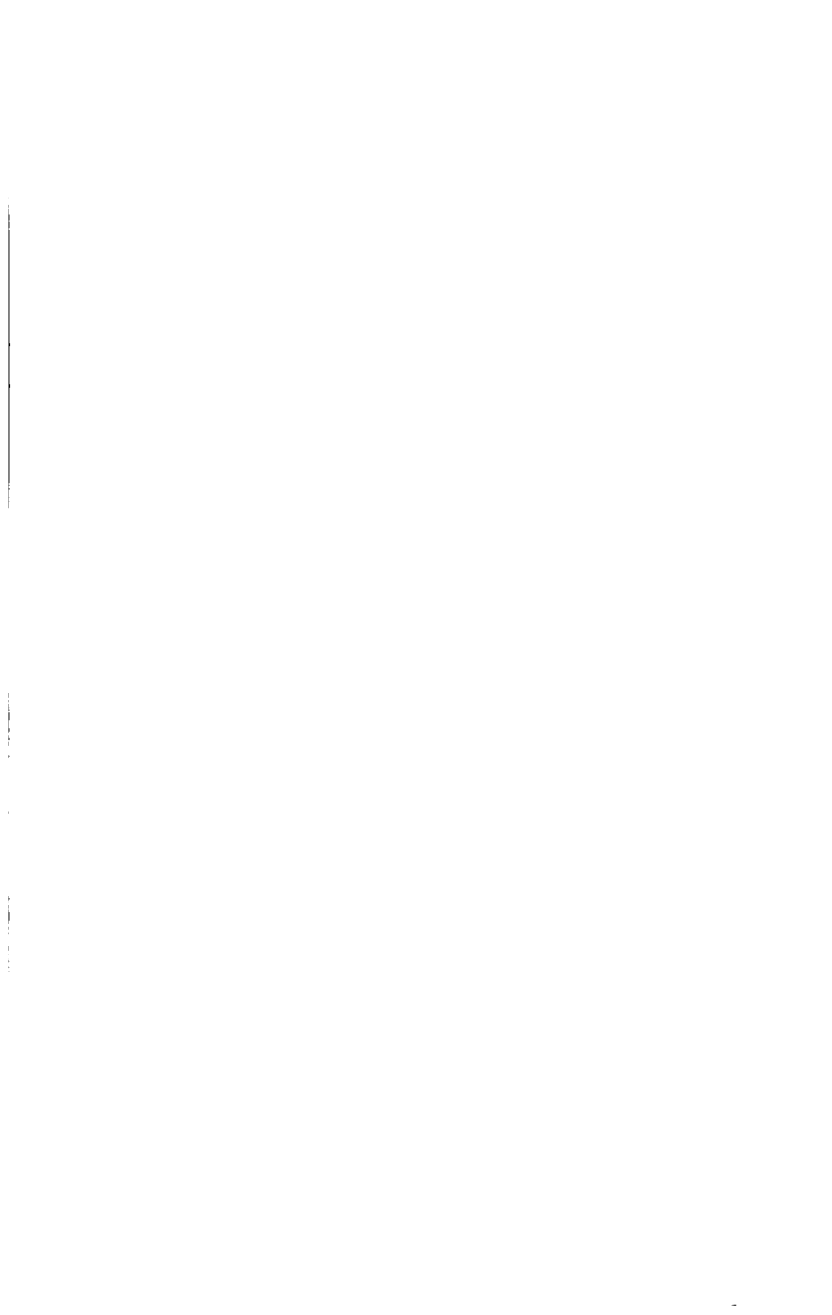
In this way did the Church of England Prelates fan the flames of persecution. They identified their own cause with that of "the Church of Christ," and, with characteristic presumption and injustice, denounced the Puritans as "new-fangled fellows," who favoured "sedition," and were engaged in "tumultuous enterprises." They were held to be not only odious as schismatics, who arrogantly resisted the Apostolic authority and dogmatic infallibility of the Queen and her Bishops, but they were represented as dangerous subjects who contemned the prerogative of the "Governess" of the Church, and resisted the interference of authority with conscience.

¹⁹ The principal opponent of Cartwright was Whitgift, subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury ; but although the former had the advantages on his side of ability, learning, and a good cause, yet the latter triumphed in a worldly sense, and persecuted his adversary into exile. Fuller declares "that if Cartwright had the better of his adversary in learning, *Whitgift had more power to back his arguments* ; and by this he not only kept the field, but gained the victory."

Thus they were deemed both religiously and politically to be reprobate, and this imputation, once clamorously raised against them, was not to be easily subdued. Hence we find that from this time forth, independently of the *odium theologicum* which intolerant Churchmen incessantly directed against Protestant Dissent, revolutionary opinions, incompatible with monarchical institutions and the stability of any well-regulated Government, were persistently imputed to those who cherished the great Puritan principles of civil and religious liberty.

It is a quality of persecution, however, that it is alike powerless to arrest error as to suppress the truth. It favours, indeed, the propagation of error, because the most extravagant opinions cease to excite ridicule, and claim a certain toleration when the sincerity of conviction is cruelly tested by pains and penalties ; for although we may not sympathise with error, yet the natural tendency of human feeling is to overlook all that is evil about it in reprehending the wicked means employed to repress it. Thus powerless to suppress erroneous opinions, what madness to suppose that persecution could ever succeed in extinguishing truth. Yet despite all experience, which shows at once the futility and wickedness of attempting to suppress opinions by persecution, there are bigots and fanatics who would be as furiously intolerant to-day in waging war against freedom of conscience—had they power at command—as were the Churchmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Certainly if repressive measures, unscrupulous and severe, could have extinguished the eternal principles of truth and justice, Puritanism would not have survived the reign of Elizabeth. But persecution produced its usual effect, and notwithstanding all the cruel severity of the Queen and Prelates, the Puritan cause continued to gain ground. Notwithstanding all the restrictions that had been placed on the liberty of the Press, and although unlicensed printing was made almost





a capital crime, a succession of able pamphlets appeared in opposition to Church and State and in defence of Nonconformity, which were privately dispersed over the whole country, and gained multitudes of converts to the "good cause."

Archbishop Parker, with all the power and resources of the State at his command, found it impossible to discover the secret Printing Presses of *Martin Mar-Prelate*. His emissaries swarmed in every part of the kingdom, but they were completely baffled; and what was galling to the Archbishop, he was loathed as a persecutor, while the Puritans commanded public sympathy. Of this he complained to the Lord Treasurer and Council:—

"I understand throughout all the realm how the matter is taken; *the Puritans are justified, and we judged to be extreme persecutors*; I have observed this for seven years; if the sincerity of the gospel should end in such judgments, I fear the Council will be overcome. The Puritans slander us with books and libels, lying they care not how deep, *and yet the more they write the more they are applauded and comforted*."—*Strype's Life of Parker*, p. 389.

Thus, the exasperation of parties increased, and public sympathy enlisted itself, as it always does, on the side of the oppressed. And now an event took place which, in its consequences, was destined to change the whole ecclesiastical system of England—an event which rendered permanent the separation of the Puritans from the Church of the State, and thereby preserved the great principles involved in the successful assertion of the *right to Dissent*.

Hitherto the Puritans met for worship as best they could; they had no Church organization, nor any regular means for ensuring co-operation. Now, however, when their cause appeared most desperate—when they had arrayed against them all the powers of the State, wielded by opponents whose enmity was whetted by baffled theological rancour—when the

conviction had settled deep in their minds that from the Queen there was no hope of justice, and that Parliament, even if willing, was powerless to grant them redress—in this extremity, when clouds were thickest and prospects of relief faintest, the resolve was nobly taken to commence the systematic establishment of Protestant Dissent, and accordingly the first regular Church of Nonconformists was organized at Wandsworth—on the Thames, five miles from London—in November 1572.²⁰

“All imaginable care,” says Neal, “was taken to keep their proceedings secret, but the Bishop’s eye was upon them, who gave immediate intelligence to the High Commission, upon which the Queen issued out a proclamation for putting the Act of Uniformity in execution; but, though the Commissioners knew of the presbytery, they could not discover the members of it, nor prevent others being erected in the neighbouring counties.”²¹

Thus, when the hour was darkest and the circumstances of the times appeared most adverse, the brave spirit of honest and zealous men laid the foundations of the SACRED EDIFICE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ENGLAND. Such was the result of the wicked system of persecution so rigorously enforced by one who has been revered as “the great Protestant Queen”—the cause sought to be overthrown and extirpated had only taken deeper and firmer root. A policy that was designed to crush and destroy, only succeeded in building up and imparting new vitality and strength. Yet experience, as we shall see, brought no wisdom to the councils of Church and State.

²⁰ Besides the clergymen who attended, Neal says—“Eleven Elders were chosen, and their offices described in a register entitled *The Orders of Wandsworth*. This was the first Presbyterian Church in England.”—*Hist. of Puritans*, vol. i. p. 244.

²¹ *Hist. of Purit.*, vol. i. p. 244.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the Persecution of Roman Catholics under Elizabeth.

ALTHOUGH Elizabeth was devoid of sincerity, and had ill-defined and unsettled notions concerning religion—although she obviously regarded the shadow more than the substance, and made profession, like charity, cover a multitude of imperfections in performance—although whatever ideas she possessed respecting divine worship were of a Pagan rather than a Christian complexion, being more consonant with the pomp and pageantry of theatrical spectacle, than with the reverential homage of heart and intellect, rendered with the sincerity of conviction and the simplicity of truth—still, her ecclesiastical policy was subject to no capricious vacillations, but was uniform and consistent in its wickedness throughout.

That policy—based solely on personal and political considerations—was viciously selfish in every respect; for the diffusion of Scriptural knowledge and truth, the advancement of free and enlightened Protestantism, never constituted an actuating motive with her. Submission—blind and implicit—to her authority as supreme Governess of the Church, as well as holding absolute sovereignty over the State, was the key-stone of her whole policy, ecclesiastical and political.

We have seen how this policy, pursued with a reckless disregard of justice, resulted in a great schism among English Protestants, which had, however, the happy effect of preserving the true Protestant spirit, though it weakened and corrupted the Established Church to such an extent that it became a

curse rather than a blessing to the nation. This policy was fraught with destruction to the Church it was designed to consolidate with the State, because it alienated the true Protestants, on whom the altar and the throne were alike dependent. It created and perpetuated divisions and animosities among Protestants, while its evil effects were not less baneful in alienating the loyal Roman Catholics, to conciliate whom, by the impartial administration of just and tolerant laws, was imperatively demanded by the exigencies of the times as a matter of political prudence, while it was a primary duty that a wise and beneficent Sovereign would have been prompt and eager in discharging.

Elizabeth, however, was not such a sovereign, in any just and reasonable view that can be taken of her character, which has come down to us not more befouled by the malignancy of blind enmity, than bedaubed with false colouring by the unscrupulous adulation of partisans and sycophants. It was a great calamity that the fiery despotism of her disposition would tolerate no liberty, religious or civil, incompatible with the absolute supremacy of her prerogative. Hence, Roman Catholics, equally with Protestants, who refused to render idolatrous worship at the shrine of the Great Diana of Church and State, were alike persecuted and made the victims of iniquitous penal legislation.

But the evils necessarily resulting from the ecclesiastical policy of Elizabeth, were vastly aggravated, their influences strengthened and made more lasting, in consequence of the time afforded—during her long reign of four-and-forty years—for them to become developed and matured. Thus the bigotry, the intolerance, the shameless injustice inseparable from the religious ascendancy of an exclusively privileged Church in alliance with the State, engrafted on the Constitution a policy of persecution which became a necessary condition of the continued existence of such an alliance. In this way

the seed was sown that bore perennial crops of calamities to disturb and afflict the nation during succeeding generations ; until wiser, more enlightened and civilizing views of Christian philosophy and statesmanship prevailed, which enabled the intelligence of the 19th century to achieve its emancipation by renouncing the barbarous inheritance transmitted from the 16th.

It has been pleaded in extenuation of the ecclesiastical policy of Elizabeth, which was marked by so malignant a repugnance to effective Reformation, that she aimed at reconciling the Roman Catholics to the changes she had effected, and hoped, by adhering to much of their doctrine, while largely retaining their gorgeous ceremonial, to entice them into conformity with her Anglo-Roman Church under her "headship" instead of that of the Pope!¹

Such an assumption, however, is perfectly gratuitous. But even if there was the shadow of a pretext for imputing such motives to her during the first eleven years of her reign, there was no longer any reason to assume their existence after the publication of the Papal Bull of excommunication in February, 1570. That bull declared Elizabeth to be cut off, as the minister of iniquity, from the community of the faithful, while it released her subjects from their allegiance, and forbade them, under the pain of incurring the same sentence as herself, to recognize her any longer as their sovereign.

¹ We have already, p. 126-7, given some evidence to illustrate the disposition of Elizabeth in favour of Roman Catholic ceremonials. Those who desire further evidence can consult the *Hierurgia Anglicana*, by the Rev. J. F. Russell, in which numerous authorities are collected, to show the Popish tendencies of the Queen.

Among the ornaments of the altar, in her private chapel, enumerated in Leland's *Collectanea*, vol. ii. p. 691, we find "two candlesticks of crystal, two ships (dishes shaped like a boat for incense) of mother-of-pearl, one tablet of gold set with diamonds, another ship of mother-of-pearl, two pairs of candlesticks of gold, two great candlesticks double gilt, with lights of virgin wax, and a cross."

In whatever light the publication of this bull may be considered, it must be confessed it was about the most impolitic act that Pope Pius V. could have committed. Its direct effect was to afford the most palpable evidence of his own pitiful impotency, for he was utterly powerless of himself to enforce it; while with the policy of France and Spain it did not then accord to declare war against England, merely for the purpose of attempting to enforce the insolent decree of the Pope. Besides, by publishing such a bull, he manifested a desire to reassert pretensions against which monarchical Europe—Roman Catholic as well as Protestant—was unanimous in rebelling.

If this aggressive act had only demonstrated the superlative folly of the Pope, his unbounded arrogance and ridiculous impotency, it might have excited derision, or been regarded as evidence that political sagacity was not an attribute of Papal infallibility. But although it was entirely inconsequential as regards the purposes for which it was fulminated, it nevertheless exercised a very prejudicial effect, not only on the position of the Roman Catholics in England, but also on the bearing of the Queen towards the Puritans.

With respect to the Roman Catholics the Papal policy operated most injuriously, exposing them to undeserved imputations of disloyalty, and thereby afforded a plausible pretext for their persecution. The Catholic historian says:—

“If the Pontiff promised himself any particular benefit from this measure, the result must have disappointed his expectations. The time was gone by when the thunders of the Vatican could shake the thrones of princes. By foreign powers the Bull was suffered to sleep in silence; among the English Catholics it served only to breed doubts, disunion, and dismay. Many contended that it had been issued by incompetent authority: others that it could not bind the natives till it should be carried into actual execution by some foreign power: all agreed that it was in their regard an imprudent and cruel expedient, which rendered them

liable to the suspicion of disloyalty, and afforded their enemies a pretence to brand them with the name of traitors."—*Lingard's Hist. of Eng.*, vol. viii. p. 67.

At this time there was an intrigue on foot to marry the Duke of Norfolk to Mary Queen of Scots, and effect a Roman Catholic combination powerful enough to drive Elizabeth from the throne. The Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland were the dupes of a faction in France with the Pope at their head, the object being to mature such a combination and make it powerful. At his secret instigation, "the Earls" headed an insurrection that was easily suppressed, and the miserable failure of which led to the infliction of great, and—in the majority of instances—undeserved suffering on the English Catholics, while it had a most decided effect in rendering the throne of Elizabeth more secure.

Several emissaries of the Pope were despatched to excite the spirit of insurrection in England. Among others was a Dr. Nicholas Morton, who visited the northern counties in the spring of 1569, with a special delegation from the Pope as "*Apostolic Penitentiary*." "He urged," says Camden, "the northern gentlemen to rebellion, and informed them of the intended excommunication of the Queen."—*Camden's Eliz.*, 194.

Lingard admits this. He says of Morton—"Of his activity in preparing the insurrection, there can be little doubt."—*Hist. of Eng.*, vol. vi. p. 102, *note*. It was this interference of the Popes with the peace of England that led to a great deal of the harsh legislation to which the British Roman Catholics were exposed during the 16th and 17th centuries.

It was in furtherance of such a scheme for the re-establishment of Popery in England, that the Pope published his Bull of excommunication against Elizabeth. It is significant, however, as showing how political interests were always considered paramount to religious by Roman Catholic monarchs, that even the bigoted and fanatical Philip of Spain condemned

the Pope in this matter, because although designed in the hope of serving the interests of the Church, it was ill-advised, and calculated, as he thought, to promote the objects of French policy.

Writing to his ambassador at Rome, Philip said :—" The instrument you have forwarded to me declaring the Queen of England deprived of her realm, *was the first which I had heard about the business.* His Holiness took the step without communicating with me, and I assure you I am not a little surprised at it. Knowing, as I do, intimately the condition of that realm, I could have given him better advice than others, whose counsels he seems to have followed. He is zealous, and perhaps thinks that only this was wanting to bring about what he desires. I shall be very happy to find that he is right ; but my fear is, that not only the effect will not be favourable, but that so sudden and ill-advised a measure will only embitter men's humours, and drive the Queen to extremities."—*Philip to Don Guerau, June 10, 1570.*

To his ambassador at Paris he wrote in a somewhat more explicit strain :—" The Pope should have consulted me before taking this step. I cannot but feel uneasy that it was concealed from me. *It means mischief, and we must get to the bottom of it.* We must find out what the French are after—their usual tricks, no doubt ! If there be anything of this kind we may credit it to the Cardinal of Lorraine, whose actions show that you have done him no injustice in the opinion you have formed of his character."—*Philip to Don Francis d'Alava, June 26, 1570.*

The English Catholics, though they had many heavy grievances to complain of, yet, as a body, they held aloof, and wisely refused to participate in the insurrection of "the Earls." They could not, as a matter of conscience, take the Oath of Supremacy, nor comply with the Act of Uniformity, but they acknowledged the legal title of Elizabeth to the throne, and

were content, if permitted, to live peaceably under her government. So far, indeed, from yielding obedience to the secret instigations of the Pope's emissaries, and braving the penalties of high treason by joining the insurrection, the great bulk of the northern Catholics ranged themselves under the Queen's lieutenant, the Earl of Sussex, and, by such a timely demonstration of loyalty, materially aided in extinguishing the rebellion. Yet, this creditable manifestation of loyalty at so critical a moment, produced no abatement of the legal disabilities under which the Catholics laboured.

Had the northern Catholics in a body joined "the Earls," the probabilities are, that Elizabeth would then have been dethroned. But, so far from responding to the appeal of the insurgent leaders, Lingard states that the Catholic gentlemen shunned their approach, and in most instances hastened to the royal banner, under the Earl of Sussex—the principal portion of whose army consisted of Catholic gentlemen and their tenants; and no circumstance contributed so much to the speedy suppression of the rebellion as the apathy of the Catholics, who had been mainly calculated on for sustaining it. —*Hist. of Eng.*, vol. vi. pp. 105, 106. Sixth edition.

It might have been supposed indeed, that, notoriously well disposed as Elizabeth was to Romish worship, she would have dealt tenderly with the Catholics, and permitted them the exercise of their religion. But paramount in her mind, above and beyond all other considerations, was the desire to maintain the undisputed supremacy of her sovereign prerogative, ecclesiastical as well as temporal; consequently, she demanded implicit obedience—a blind, unreasoning obedience to the Acts of Supremacy and of Uniformity, so far, at least, as outward conformity was concerned; and, because conscientious Roman Catholics, equally with Puritans, refused to be hypocrites, they were cruelly exposed to all the penalties provided for non-compliance.

It has been asserted, indeed, to palliate the wicked conduct of Elizabeth, that the Roman Catholics enjoyed considerable toleration until after the insurrection of "the Earls," to which cause must be ascribed the commencement of active persecution. But such an assertion cannot be maintained, as persecution commenced in the very first year of Elizabeth's reign, when the Act of Supremacy was passed.² But, unnecessarily oppressive as was the oath exacted by that Act, it became much more so in 1562, when another Act was passed "for the assurance of the Queen's royal power over all estates and subjects within her dominions." Which enacted, with what Hallam denounces as "*an iniquitous and sanguinary retrospect*," that all persons who had ever taken holy orders, or any degree in the Universities, or had been admitted to the practice of the laws, or held any office in their execution, should be bound to take the Oath when duly tendered to them, under penalty on a first refusal of a præmunire, but on a second refusal, after an interval of three months, all the pains of high treason were incurred. This placed the whole Catholic population of England at the mercy of the Government, and it is no excuse for such infamous legislation that matters were not driven to extremities by its rigorous and general enforcement.

It was, however, under the Act of Uniformity that the

² Hallam says :—"Camden, and many others have asserted that by systematic connivance the Roman Catholics enjoyed a pretty free use of their religion for the first fourteen years of Elizabeth's reign. But this is not reconcilable to many passages in Strype's collections. We find abundant evidence of persons harassed for recusancy, that is, for not attending the Protestant Church, and driven to insincere promises of conformity. Others were dragged before ecclesiastical commissioners for harbouring priests, or for sending money to those who had fled beyond sea. Students of the Inns of Court, where Popery had a stronghold at that time, were examined in the Star Chamber as to their religion, and on not giving satisfactory answers, were committed to the Fleet."—*Const. Hist. of England*, i. 120.

Roman Catholics, as well as the Puritans, suffered the greatest persecution. That Act, we have seen, prohibited under pain of forfeiting goods and chattels for the first offence, of a year's imprisonment for the second, and of imprisonment during life for the third, the use by a minister, whether beneficed or not, of any but the established liturgy ; and imposed a fine on all who should absent themselves from Church on Sundays and holy days. Hence, there was an absolute interdiction, under this Act, of Roman Catholic worship, publicly or privately, and equally so of Puritan worship, or of any worship save the established, and this law was not allowed to remain a dead letter. Strype relates how Sir Edward Waldegrave and his lady were sent to the Tower in 1561 for hearing mass and having a priest in their house, while many others suffered for the same offence.³

It appears that some difficulty was occasionally experienced in procuring convictions, when parties arrested on suspicion refused to give evidence tending to criminate themselves. But the Bishops would admit no such constitutional plea, and even the mildest and most reputable among them, Bishop Grindal, *recommended that the torture should be applied to extort criminatory confessions!* Writing to the Council respecting a priest who refused to become his own accuser, the Bishop said :—

*"Some think if this Priest might be put to some kind of torment, and so driven to confess what he knoweth, he might gain the Queen's Majesty a good mass of money by the masses that he hath said ; but this we refer to your lordships' wisdom."*⁴—*Hayne's State Papers*, 395.

³ Strype's Annals, i. 233-241.

⁴ Grindal had Puritan sympathies. He was the best of Elizabeth's prelates. He subsequently became Archbishop of Canterbury, but, in consequence of his liberal and tolerant views, he incurred the Queen's displeasure, and she had no remorse in suspending him. Her cruelty broke his spirit, and hurried him to a premature grave. Yet this prelate,

The grievous injustice to which the Roman Catholics were thus exposed drove many, early in Elizabeth's reign, to seek refuge in other countries, where they engaged in fomenting conspiracies against her throne, which only ceased with her life. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the inevitable tendency of such oppression as the Catholics endured was to create and diffuse an intense feeling of dissatisfaction. The mere instinct of self-preservation would naturally lead the oppressed to desire the overthrow of the tyrannical government under which they now were not only denied the rights of free subjects, but were compelled to endure a degradation greater even than that of feudal serfdom.⁵

"There are not in all this country ten gentlemen," says Sadler, "that do favour and allow of Her Majesty's proceedings in the cause of religion."⁶ "It is my thorough conviction," says Hallam, "that the persecution—for it can obtain no better name—carried on against the English Catholics, however it might serve to delude the government by producing an apparent conformity, could not but excite a spirit of disloyalty in many adherents of that faith."⁷ Even those who deemed it expedient to conform occasionally, in order to escape the penalties attached to recusancy, had their discontent embittered by the loss of self-respect which such prudent

with all his amiability of character, was so much of a priest that he had the spirit of an *Inquisitor*, and so much of an Established Churchman that he could not regard otherwise than with bigotry and intolerance the free exercise of the Roman Catholic worship. We find him with a levity characteristic of his age, making light of the sufferings of tortured victims, and attempting a miserable pun on the word *mass*.

⁵ By the Act of Uniformity the penalty for saying, or causing mass to be said, was 100 marks for the first offence, equal to about £300 at least of our currency. "Imprisonments were probably, in many cases, illegal," says Hallam, "and only sustained by the arbitrary power of the High Commission Court."—*Hist. of Eng.*, i. 114, note.

⁶ State Papers, ii. 55.

⁷ Const. History of England, i. 122.

hypocrisy necessarily involved. Lingard says very fairly all that can be reasonably said in justification of those Catholics who, whether at home or in exile, equally goaded by the tyranny of Elizabeth's government, plotted to effect its overthrow.

"They saw around them examples of successful insurrection in the cause of religious liberty. The Calvinists of Scotland had established their own creed in defiance of all opposition; the Calvinists of France had thrice waged war against their own sovereign: both had been aided with men and money by the Queen of England. *If this were lawful to other religionists, why might not they also draw the sword, and claim the rights of conscience.*"—*Hist. of Eng.* vol. vi. p. 104.

But although disaffection naturally enough generally prevailed among the Catholics, still the nobility, the gentry, and their dependents were not disposed to encourage, much less to participate in, insurrectionary enterprises. As Englishmen they were undoubtedly loyal to their country, and had no desire to see its interests made subsidiary to the ambitious policy of the Pope, or of France, or of Spain. Such was the position of the Catholics when the Pope committed the monstrous imprudence of publishing his Bull of Excommunication, and unhappily the immediate effect of this most insolent and aggressive act was an imperious demand, by Protestants generally, for additional penal legislation against Popery.

So unreasoning and unreasonable was the mind of that day, so warped by false principles, the slave of besotted prejudices, and corrupted with the dregs of grovelling superstitions, that the ruling faction who exulted in Church and State ascendancy, proclaimed it impossible for religious Dissenters to be loyal subjects, good citizens, or honest men! This became a prevailing belief. It obtained legislative recognition; it was incorporated with our jurisprudence; it ruled in society; and

endured even to our own time, professed and cherished by High Church fanatics, and the intolerant adherents of Tory ascendancy.

That no discrimination should have been exercised in legislating for Roman Catholics was not creditable to the statesmanship that animated the councils of the Queen, or to the sense of justice that influenced what little there then was of public opinion. By confounding the loyal with the disloyal, and including both alike in penal legislation of the most atrocious and ferocious character, a great political crime was committed, the mischievous effects of which have not even yet died out.

Long before the era of the Reformation—in fact, with the increase of Papal usurpations—two parties grew up among the Roman Catholics of Europe, properly distinguishable as the *national* and the *ultramontane*. The former admitted the infallibility of the Pope, not *per se*, but in conjunction with a council, and under certain conditions, while they resisted the aggressions of the Papacy on the independence of States, and maintained the supremacy of temporal sovereigns in temporal matters, within their own realms, notwithstanding all Papal pretensions and usurpations to the contrary. Thus the *Nationalists* were Catholics pure and simple as regards religious faith, while at the same time in political affairs they were as determined as any Protestants could be in upholding what they deemed the interests of their country totally independent of all Papal pretensions.

The *Ultramontanists*, on the contrary, were content with no half measures. They placed no limitations whatever on Papal pretensions to an infallible supremacy both ecclesiastical and temporal. They regarded the Pope as infallible *per se*—as having a Divine jurisdiction over the whole world to rule supreme, not only in spirituals, but in temporals also; and it was thus apparent that Ultramontane doctrine was totally

inconsistent with the independent sovereignty of nations, because it affirmed that a primary and unconditional allegiance was due to the Pope as "the Vicegerent of Christ," before which all ties of loyalty and of nationality were to be considered as rotten straws !⁸

In the reign of Elizabeth these parties had a distinctive existence. The Ultramontanists, however, formed but a miserable faction of the great body of English Catholics. For the most part they had left the country, and had taken up their residence in Spain or France, where they indulged in day-dreams about the re-establishment of Popery in England, and hatched conspiracies for the assassination of the Queen.

* With the ascendancy of the Jesuits at Rome, the two parties we have referred to became more distinct in the Church, and even among Catholics Jesuit morality or Ultramontane doctrines became a reproach. The Gallican Church became the representative of what may be termed the *National Catholics* in contradistinction to the *Papists*, or *Ultramontanés*.

The same parties are still found, not only in Great Britain, but wherever the Roman Catholic Church exists, and in discussing matters respecting Roman Catholics, the essential difference in belief and principle between a Catholic simply in faith, and a Papist who professes Ultramontane principles, should always be observed. All Papists are Roman Catholics, but all Catholics who profess the religious faith of Rome are not Papists.

The celebrated Daniel O'Connell, insisted on the great difference we have indicated when he observed—"It was not the Catholic barons of the reign of John that crouched beneath Papal usurpations. It was a profligate, faithless, unprincipled prince, who used the Pope's then authority to enable him to enslave a Catholic people. I am of the faith of the Catholic barons, who with their swords extorted the Great Charter of liberty ; I am of the religion of the Catholic Parliament that passed the Statute of Provisors ; firm in my attachment to her ancient faith, ardent in the pursuit of liberty." And on another occasion the same authority said—"I am sincerely a Catholic, but I am not a Papist."—*O'Connell's Speeches, Duffy's Edition*, pp. 359, 447.

At the present day the intelligent Catholics of Great Britain desire only to enjoy political and religious equality, while the Papists are the servile partisans of insolent Papal pretensions to ascendancy, which are totally incompatible with our civil and religious liberties, and our free institutions.

To resist Ultramontane doctrines, and circumvent diabolical assassination plots during such a critical period as Elizabeth's reign, legislation, however penal and severe, could scarcely be condemned. The only limit to severity was expediency, but the misfortune was that the Government of the day made no distinction between the innocent and the guilty. A blind prejudice an intense bigotry and intolerance, by the grossest injustice, imputed the palpable disloyalty of a miserable faction to the whole Catholic population, and all were mercilessly included in one sweeping, indiscriminating condemnation.

Religious antipathies presided over legislation, and thus the foundations of a Penal Code were laid which was destined to transcend in fiendish ingenuity and cold-blooded atrocity any system of persecution that ever outraged justice and disgraced human nature. Such of the Queen's Council, observes Hallam,

"As leaned towards the Puritan faction, and too many of the Anglican Clergy, whether Puritan or not, *thought no measure of charity or compassion should be extended to them* (the Catholics). With the divines they were idolaters; with the Council they were a dangerous and disaffected party; with the judges they were refractory transgressors of statutes; *on every side they were obnoxious and oppressed.*"—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 140.

Thus the great evil of the Pope's Bull of Excommunication was, that it afforded a plausible pretext to those who were but too well disposed to persecute the English Catholics. It so inflamed senseless animosities, and warped the minds of Protestants who claimed liberty of conscience for themselves, that they became incapable of perceiving the shameless inconsistency of refusing to extend the same right to their Catholic fellow-countrymen.

Independently of the Acts of Supremacy and of Uniformity,

under which conscientious and loyal Roman Catholics could be persecuted to any extent—even unto death—there were other Acts specially directed against them, and which formed the nucleus of the horrible Penal Code that has left an indelible brand of infamy on the Church of the Reformation in alliance with the State.

The Act of Uniformity operated as an absolute interdiction of Catholic rites, however privately celebrated ; but in addition, the Act 5 Eliz. c. 1, enabled any Bishop or royal commissioner to tender the oath of supremacy to any Catholic, who, if he persisted in refusing it, became subject to the penalties of high treason !

Then the 13 Eliz. c. 2, enacted that reconciling any one to the Church of Rome, that is, inducing any one to become a Catholic, was a capital felony, while the party reconciled also incurred the penalties of high treason ! To bring into the kingdom any crosses, pictures, beads, or “superstitious things” blessed by the Pope, or under his authority, involved a præmunire, while to conceal or connive at the offenders was declared to be misprision of treason.

“This statute,” says Hallam, “exposed the Catholic priesthood, and in a great measure the laity, to the continual risk of martyrdom ; for so many had fallen away from their faith through a pliant spirit of conformity with the times, that the regular discipline would exact their absolution and reconciliation before they could be reinstated in the Church’s communion.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. p. 138.

By another law, passed in 1584, all Jesuits, Seminary Priests, or other Priests, whether ordained within or without the kingdom, were ordered to depart from it within forty days, on pain of being adjudged traitors. Parties having knowledge of Priests evading the law, and not informing, were liable to fine and imprisonment at the Queen’s pleasure. “This,” says the authority above quoted, “seemed to fill up the measure of

persecution, and to render the longer preservation of this obnoxious religion absolutely impracticable."

But after the dispersion of "The Invincible Armada," when Catholic loyalty shone so conspicuously, notwithstanding all the persecution and discouragement to which it was exposed, a more truculent intolerance seemed to animate the authorities in Church and State, and the penal oppression of the Catholics was aggravated.

A statute, 23 Eliz. c. 2, was enacted, restraining "Popish recusants"—a distinctive name now first imposed by law—to particular places of residence, and subjecting the loyal Catholic population to other vexatious provisions.

Such were the principal enactments of the persecuting system, so iniquitously established by Elizabeth against the Catholics, with whom she, at the same time, had far more doctrinal sympathy than with Evangelical Protestantism !

As Elizabeth never would consent to marry or settle the succession, the hopes of English Catholics, as well as the conspiracies of foreign enemies of the Reformation, centred in Mary Queen of Scots, who in the event of Elizabeth's death, had the best title to the throne. But when, "in violation of all national, public, and municipal law," as Hallam expresses it, Mary was detained a prisoner in England for nineteen years, and then judicially murdered, the Catholics by her death had all their hopes extinguished ; yet the fact stands in vindication of their loyalty that, though grievously persecuted, they remained steadfast in their allegiance. Equally national, loyal, and true were they when the "Invincible Armada" threatened the conquest of England ; among the whole population none were more forward in the defence of their country and its liberties than the Catholics, who were regarded by the law as aliens and denied their rights as subjects and citizens. Hallam says :—

"As the Catholics endured, without any open murmuring, the

execution of her on whom their fond hopes had so long rested, *so for the remainder of the Queen's reign they by no means appear, when considered as a body, to have furnished any specious pretexts for severity.*

"In that memorable year when the dark cloud gathered round our coasts, when Europe stood by in fearful suspense to behold what should be the result of that great cast in the game of human politics, what the craft of Rome, the power of Philip, the genius of Farnese, could achieve against the island-queen with her Drakes and Cecils—in that agony of the Protestant faith and English name, *they stood the trial of their spirits without swerving from their allegiance.*

"It was then that the Catholics in every county repaired to the standard of the Lord-Lieutenant, imploring that they might not be suspected of bartering the national independence for their religion itself. It was then that the venerable Lord Montague brought a troop of horse to the Queen at Tilbury, commanded by himself, his son, and grandson.

"It would have been a sign of gratitude if the law depriving them of the free exercise of their religion had been, if not repealed, yet suffered to sleep, after these proofs of loyalty. *But the execution of Priests and of other Catholics became on the contrary more frequent, and the fines for recusancy were exacted as rigorously as before.*"—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 162.

It is a fact too generally overlooked, that nearly as many Roman Catholics were publicly executed for their religion under Elizabeth, as there were Protestant martyrs under Mary. If, however, we take into account all those who died in consequence of the hardships to which they were exposed, and of diseases contracted in loathsome dungeons, and if we include the deaths of Protestant Nonconformists as well as of Catholics, the reign of Elizabeth must be pronounced as beyond comparison more savage and sanguinary than that of the unhappy Mary.

"From the defeat of the Armada till the death of the Queen," says Lingard, "during the lapse of fourteen years, the Catholics groaned under pressure of incessant persecution. Sixty-one

clergymen, forty-seven laymen, and two gentlewomen, suffered capital punishment for some or other of the *spiritual felonies* and treasons which had been lately created.

"Generally the court dispensed with the examination of witnesses ; by artful and ensnaring questions an avowal was drawn from the prisoner, that he had been reconciled, or had harboured a Priest, or had been ordained beyond the sea, or that he admitted the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope, or rejected that of the Queen. Any one of these crimes was sufficient to consign him to the scaffold.

"Life, indeed, was always offered, on condition of conformity to the established worship ; but the offer was generally refused, and the refusal was followed by death ; and the butchery, with very few exceptions, was performed on the victim while he was yet in perfect possession of his senses.

"These executions, however, affected but a small part of the Catholic population ; the general grievance consisted in the penalties of recusancy. If we consider the relative value of money, we shall see that it required an ample fortune to pay the perpetual fine of twenty pounds per lunar month. Most gentlemen were compelled to sell a considerable portion of their estates that they might satisfy the demand, and whenever they were in arrear, the Queen was empowered by law to seize the whole of their personal and two-thirds of their real estate every sixth months."—*Hist. of Eng.* 6th Edit. vol. vi. p. 257.

The first Catholic martyr under Elizabeth was Thomas Woodhouse, an old English Priest who would not acknowledge the Queen's ecclesiastical supremacy by taking the oath. He was hanged and quartered alive at Tyburn, on the 19th of June, 1573.—*Stowe*, 677.

The first *Seminary* Priest—as those educated and admitted to orders abroad were called—who suffered, was one Cuthbert Mayne, and his religion was the only crime with which he was accused. He was also butchered alive in 1577, while fifteen persons were condemned at the same time as aiders and abettors of his treason. One gentleman, who charitably

afforded him shelter, was sentenced to imprisonment for life !
—*Dodd's Hist.*, vol. ii. pp. 92, 94.

The “butcheries” of which Lingard so justly complains as having been practised on the martyrs consisted in the *quartering of them alive*. Instead of having been first hanged or beheaded, and then, when life was extinct, disembowelled and quartered, the butchery generally commenced when the victims were alive, and as Lingard says, “in perfect possession of their senses.”

Strype preserves a memorial, which was presented to Lord Burghley, mercifully recommending that Priests should be hanged, “and the manner of drawing and quartering forborne.” But so illustrious a genius as Lord Bacon defends the barbarous practice of disembowelling and quartering alive, on the ground that it was *less cruel than the wheel, or forcipation, or even simple burning!*—*Works*, vol. i. p. 534.

We have various accounts respecting the actual number of Catholic martyrs, properly so-called, who cruelly perished during Elizabeth's reign. Authorities vary in their calculations between 204 and 191, exclusive of those who perished in prison, exile, &c. A great many of those victims were priests, whose sole crime was administering the rites of religion in secret to those of their own faith. But as Hallam observes:—

“The public executions, numerous as they were, scarcely form the most odious part of this persecution. The common law of England had always abhorred the accursed mysteries of a prison-house, and neither admits of torture to extort confession, nor of any penal infliction not warranted by a judicial sentence.

“But this law, though still sacred in the courts of justice, was set aside by the Privy Council under the Tudor line. *The rack seldom stood idle in the Tower for all the latter part of Elizabeth's reign.*

“Such excessive severities under the pretext of treason, *but sustained by very little evidence of any other offence than the exercise of the Catholic ministry*, excited indignation throughout a great part of Europe.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 148.

Torture was constantly employed during the reign of Elizabeth to extort confessions criminatory of the victims themselves, and of others whom the Queen and Council desired to implicate in treasonable overt acts. The *torture chamber* was in the Tower, and the various instruments used were : *the rack*, which stretched the sufferer till his joint bones were torn from their sockets. *The scavenger's daughter*, which was a broad iron hoop made to embrace the victim when doubled up head and knees. *The iron gauntlets* were fastened on the wrists and compressed by screws. There were rings on the gauntlets by which the victim was suspended, and in addition to the tight screwing the whole weight of the body was thus thrown on the arms. *Little Ease* was a place of such contracted dimensions that when thrust into it the sufferer could neither stand, nor sit, nor lie down at full length, but had to compress himself into a squatting posture, in which position he had to remain for days.

Such were the infernal devices that Church and State employed to establish a wicked, anti-Christian ascendancy in England, which was fraught with deadly discouragement to the spread of true Protestantism. As Lord Bacon defended disembowelling and quartering alive, so did Prelates of the Establishment defend the use of torture. A humane man, Beal, Clerk of the Queen's Council, ventured to publish a work in 1588, against the ecclesiastical system as it then prevailed, and among other things, he condemned the barbarous use of torture.

Archbishop Whitgift assailed the book, and complained that Beal "*condemns, without exception of any cause, racking of grievous offenders, as being cruel, barbarous, contrary to law, and unto the liberty of English subjects.*" This the Archbishop, in the true spirit of a Churchman, denounces as an "enormous proposition."—*Strype's Life of Whitgift*, i. 212; and see note 4, *ante*.





We have thus seen how the penal legislation, of which the Catholics of great Britain became peculiarly the victims, was systematized under Elizabeth, and incorporated with our jurisprudence—corrupting and brutalizing, polluting and perverting the ancient principles and generous course of English justice. An infamous penal code was thus created, which disgraced the British Government and nation for nearly 300 years—a code that, under the false pretence of promoting Protestantism, did all corrupting influences could do to degrade Protestant principles, and make the profession of religion subservient to the monopolizing designs of a political faction.

“It is much to be regretted,” says Hallam, “that *any writers worthy of respect* should either, through undue prejudice against an adverse religion, or through timid acquiescence in whatever has been enacted, *have offered for this odious code the false pretexts* of political necessity. That necessity, I am persuaded, can never be made out: the statutes were, in many instances, absolutely unjust; in others not demanded by circumstances; in almost all, prompted by religious bigotry, by excessive apprehension, or by the arbitrary spirit with which our Government was administered under Elizabeth.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 169.

When every manifestation of Catholic loyalty was met, on the part of State Protestantism, with fresh outbursts of malignant bigotry, and when every sacrifice they made to sustain the honour and independence of their country was rewarded by the forging of additional shackles to make their penal degradation more galling, the natural effect of such a criminal and blundering policy was to goad into more vicious activity those Papists whose Ultramontane doctrines taught them to regard Elizabeth as a usurper, to consider her Government as unlawful, and contemplate her assassination in the light of a desirable and meritorious act. These Papists were the coun-

terparts of the extreme bigots and intolerants on the Protestant side, to whose malignant animosities, ignorant antipathies, and bloodthirsty prejudices, Elizabeth's policy so cruelly pandered ; and thus the wickedness of her Government reacted with retributive force on the peace and security of her throne. So it is that

———“ in these cases

We still have judgment here ; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor.”

“ It is equally candid and reasonable to believe,” says Hallam, “ that if a fair and legal toleration, or even a general connivance at the exercise of their worship, had been conceded in the first part of Elizabeth's reign, she would have spared herself those perpetual terrors of rebellion which occupied all her later years. Rome would not, indeed, have been appeased, and some desperate fanatics might have sought her life ; *but the English Catholics*, collectively, would have repaid her protection by an attachment which even her rigour seems not wholly to have prevented.”⁹

There was always a majority, both in the Queen's Council and in Parliament, during this reign, favourable to any coercive measures that might be proposed against the Catholics. In too many instances those who were zealous in their desire to obtain liberty of conscience for Protestant Nonconformists, were equally zealous in supporting penal legislation against the Catholics. And so blindly perverse is religious fanaticism, that even Puritans were found too numerous, who, suffering for conscience sake themselves, still rejoiced in similar sufferings when endured by Catholics for a similar cause.

In this way the senseless bigotry and malignant intolerance directed against loyal Catholics had a most pernicious influence in debauching the public mind, and enabling the

⁹ Const. Hist. of Eng., i. 167.

Queen to carry out successfully her wicked antipathy to both Protestant and Catholic who repudiated her authority over conscience, and refused to believe and worship as she might imperiously dictate.

Thus the foundations of the State Church were laid in persecution and injustice. As it lengthened its cords and strengthened its stakes, so did the sufferings of Dissenters increase, and natural rights became more flagrantly violated, until a penal code was gradually established, which embraced in its persecuting folds both the Protestant and the Catholic Nonconformists. And a grave lesson is taught by the fact, that it was not until early in the present century, when, after generations of dreary misgovernment and heartless oppression, a more enlightened and Christian spirit inspired Catholic and Protestant to make common cause against the common enemy—it was not until thus united that our constitution was reformed, our jurisprudence purified, and justice tardily vindicated by the abolition of that nefarious code.

CHAPTER IX.

On the further Persecution of Nonconformists until the death of Elizabeth in 1603.

THE year 1572, so memorable in the annals of civil and religious liberty for the organization of the first Presbyterian Church in England, was also signalized by an event which, as Lingard admits, "struck with astonishment all the nations of Europe, and which cannot be contemplated without horror at the present day."¹ Religion has been made the pretext for innumerable crimes; but the *massacre of St. Bartholomew* stands alone for the diabolical craft—the hideous enormity of the bloodguiltiness, that alike characterized its conception and presided over its execution.

It is an additional reproach to the memory of Elizabeth, that her studied dissimulation and treachery tended not only to instigate so dreadful a massacre, but also served to render its execution more ruthless. At home she laboured with untiring wickedness to extirpate honest Protestantism, while abroad her perfidious policy, in dealing with the Protestants of France and the Netherlands, materially contributed to the creation of such a state of exasperated fanaticism among Catholics, as made so horrible a massacre possible.

Froude dwells on this. He remarks how her conduct in playing a double game with France and Spain, with the Prince of Orange and the Netherlands, by turns deceiving all alike, excited the deep distrust of the French Court, which the

¹ Hist. of Eng., vi. 137.

deceitful negotiations that had taken place respecting her marriage were calculated to heighten rather than to remove or mollify. The Guise faction ruled among the bigoted Paris rabble, and they were opposed to the English alliance, and the marriage of the Queen with the Duke of Anjou, which the Huguenots favoured as likely to serve the Reformed interest. This marriage she shamelessly coquetted and negotiated about, and finally flung it aside. Then she took up his brother the Duke of Alençon, some sixteen years her junior, and while professing the most cordial agreement with France respecting the policy to be pursued in the Netherlands, she treacherously entered into secret communication with the Duke of Alva to betray France to Spain.

The knowledge of such systematic perfidy naturally had the effect of inflaming the Catholic bigotry of France in opposition to the English alliance, while it added to the ferocious fanaticism with which the Huguenots were regarded, to find that they favoured the English. Thus a state of feeling was created which enabled the Queen-Mother of France and her co-conspirators to accomplish their most bloody purposes with a terrible success; and for such a state of feeling the wicked policy of Elizabeth was largely responsible.²

² Froude's Hist. of Eng., vol. x. p. 380. Froude remarks that "her own interests, her duty to the cause of which she was made, by her position, the principal representative, alike urged Elizabeth *into one bold, honourable course*. What motive could have prompted her to a reverse step it would be unsafe or unjust, in the absence of proof, to conjecture. At every different stage in her career there was always in her conduct something strange, something unexpected, and on the surface reprehensible."

It may be "unsafe and unjust" to ascribe motives, and it is not profitable to indulge in conjectures in the absence of historical evidence, but whatever Elizabeth's motives may have been, we have an overwhelming abundance of proof to establish the fact, that in no important transaction during her long career did she follow one *bold honourable course*. A disposition naturally crooked and prone to the most profound dissimulation;

Public indignation was inflamed to the highest degree when the frightful details of the St. Bartholomew massacre became fully known in England, and Elizabeth at first affected to share the popular feeling.³ But at heart she could not condemn a massacre which only carried out more completely than she dare do, her own persecuting policy. There was no difference in principle between her persecutions of the Catholic and Protestant Nonconformists of England, and the awful massacre the Queen Mother of France and the Guise faction had excited for the extermination of the Huguenots. Any difference was in degrees of wickedness—the principle of action was the same.

While Elizabeth made the policy of the St. Bartholomew butchery her own in practice, it is obvious she could not with any sincerity reprobate the massacre, nor, indeed, did she long indulge in the hypocrisy of affecting to regret it. *Within two months* after that jubilee of blood, a French princess was born; and, at the solicitation of the infamous Catherine de' Medici, she consented to be the child's godmother! She sent the Earl of Worcester, a Roman Catholic, to represent her at the French Court, and resumed negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Alençon!⁴

vain, suspicious, revengeful, and treacherous, a bold honourable course was foreign to all her feelings, and appealed to no principle that she cherished as a rule of conduct.

³ "The news of this sanguinary transaction," says Lingard, "excited throughout England *one general feeling of horror*." The astounding completeness of so enormous a crime, left no room for the imagination of narrators and the arts of politicians to exaggerate, as Lingard supposes.

⁴ The Queen consenting to be godmother to the French princess, and sending the Earl of Worcester on a special embassy to the French Court, excited great indignation in the country. Froude says—"That an English nobleman—one, too, of notoriously Catholic tendencies—*should go in state to Paris so soon after the massacre, was considered by the Protestants a hideous scandal*—so hideous, indeed, that the earl was attacked by a privateer midway between Dover and Calais. Four of his men were killed, and seven wounded."—*Hist. of Eng.*, x. 434.

In this way it was that "the great Protestant Queen of England" testified her abhorrence at the unparalleled crimes of the French Court, and manifested the sincerity of the sorrow she so ostentatiously affected for the merciless slaughter of St. Bartholomew!

While Elizabeth was thus false to Protestantism abroad—all her sympathy being with the high prerogatives of absolute monarchy, against which she was led to regard the Huguenots as rebellious subjects⁵—she still continued to pursue at home the policy of persecution against Nonconformists which is the indelible disgrace of her reign. Her despotic spirit was exasperated at the presumption of the Puritans in appealing to Parliament for toleration and protection. She again called into action all the unconstitutional prerogatives she had usurped, and the year 1573 became peculiarly prolific in persecuting measures.

She appointed Commissioners, under the Great Seal, for

⁵ Appealing to Elizabeth's unqualified sympathy with despotism, and detestation of any symptom of opposition on the part of subjects, the Queen-Mother instructed her ambassador, Fénélon, to represent the Huguenots as rebellious subjects, who had conspired to seize the royal family and alter the succession. The massacre, therefore, was an act of self-defence, which popular indignation at the conspirators carried further than the Court intended!

Lingard says—"The insinuating eloquence of Fénélon made an impression on the mind of Elizabeth; she ordered her ambassador to thank Charles for the communication; trusted he would be able to satisfy the world of the uprightness of his intention; and recommended to his protection the persons and worship of the French Protestants. "To this last point Catherine shrewdly replied, that *her son could not follow a better example than that of his good sister the Queen of England; that, like her, he would force no man's conscience; but, like her, he would prohibit in his dominions the exercise of every other worship besides that which he practised himself.*"—*Hist. of Eng.*, vi. 139.

This was a fair and perfectly unanswerable retort. If Elizabeth was right in her policy of persecution, it was impossible for the hero of St. Bartholomew to be wrong in his.

every county in England, with ample powers to enforce the penal laws, and issued a proclamation declaring it was her royal will and pleasure that all who refused compliance with the Act of Uniformity should suffer the utmost severity of the law. She severely censured the Bishops, whom she accused of being either too lax or corrupt in the use of the powers entrusted to them—not employing them for the suppression of nonconformity so much as for the enrichment of themselves, by the exaction of fines, &c. Special instructions were sent by the Lords of Council to all the Bishops, requiring them, in her Majesty's name, and under pain of her displeasure, to visit, either personally or by their archdeacons, every church within their respective jurisdictions, and see that the laws, with all the Queen's injunctions, were strictly and uniformly observed. At the same time it was ordered that all Nonconformists should be dealt with according to the full severity of the ecclesiastical laws. The Commissioners, who were practically to act as so many spies on the Bishops, before they set out for their respective counties were assembled in the Star Chamber, and, by the Queen's command, the Lord Treasurer Burghley harangued them in this fashion :—

“He said, the Queen could not satisfy her conscience without crushing the Puritans; for she thought none of her subjects worthy of her protection that favoured innovations, or that directly or indirectly countenanced the alteration of anything established in the Church; that by too much lenity they might be apt to think the exception of these novelists against the ceremonies were reasonable and well-founded, or but trifling matters of disputation; but the Queen was resolved that her orders and injunctions should not be contemned; that the public rule should be inviolably observed; and that there should be an absolute obedience.”—Styke's Life of Archbishop Parker, pp. 456—458.

Styke relates how a zealous sycophant of absolute power proposed to the Council, that all clergymen in the kingdom

should be compelled to enter into a bond of £200, binding themselves under penalty of forfeiture to conform in all things to the Act of Uniformity—the Bishops to be bound to return the names of all defaulters to the Court of Exchequer for the due recovery of the forfeited bonds!⁶ “If this project had taken place,” says Neal, “it would have ruined half the clergy of the kingdom.”⁷

Among other persecuting devices, the Bishops were ordered to make out a Nonconformist census. They were required to obtain from their clergy the names and surnames of all Nonconformists in their several parishes, while ecclesiastical officers were required to see that the clergy made correct returns.⁸ A few of the Bishops were averse to this proceeding, for the ablest and best of their clergy were those who did not strictly conform. Among these tolerant prelates was the Bishop of Norwich, then an old man on the verge of the grave. He felt the harshness of the task imposed on him, but confessed if he did not consent to become the instrument of persecuting others, he would be persecuted himself! “*I was obliged to restrain them,*” he writes to a friend, “*unless I would willingly procure my own danger. . . . I could do no less if I would avoid extreme danger.*”⁹

Archbishop Parker, however, suspected that the Bishop was not very earnest in enforcing the law, and consequently gave a special commission to creatures of his own to visit every parish in the diocese and report. They did so, and reported that “some ministers were absent, and could not be examined; that some ministers had no surplices, but said they would wear them when they were provided; that they found about three hundred Nonconformists, whom they had suspended;

⁶ Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 260; vol. ii. p. 288.

⁷ Hist. of Puritans, vol. i. p. 247.

⁸ Strype's Annals, ii. 261.

⁹ Ibid., ii. pp. 109, 261—3, 343.

thus depriving the people of the ministrations of the most learned, and pious, and conscientious among the clergy.”¹⁰

While good ministers were thus cruelly expelled from the Church, it is well to consider the character given, by such an unexceptionable authority as Strype, of those who remained within the fold of servile conformity :—

“The substantials,” he says, “were lost in contending for externals; the Churchmen heaped up many benefices upon themselves, and resided upon none; neglecting their cures. Many of them alienated their lands, made unreasonable leases, and waste of woods, and granted reversions and advowsons to their wives and children.”—*Life of Parker*, p. 395.

The Church laity of that day are represented as evincing “little devotion;” while the Court of the persecuting Queen, whose sensitive conscience could not be satisfied without *crushing the Puritans*, is emphatically denounced as “*a harbour for Epicures and Atheists*, and a kind of lawless place, because it stood in no parish, which things make good men fear some sad judgments impending over the nation.” But only such a state of things could be expected to arise from the conduct of the Queen, and of the unscrupulous adventurers who, for the most part, composed her Council, swarmed about the Court, and profited by the corruptions of Church and State. There was scarcely any sincerity in religious profession. There was much ostentation of outward conformity, and an unbounded display of profligate hypocrisy. To be conscientious, truthful, and earnest in Christian life and conversation, was reprobated as puritanical—as innovating on what was established in the Church, and the severity of barbarous laws was evoked to repress and punish.

The labours of the Royal Commissioners were productive of much suffering to Nonconformists throughout England. Clergymen summoned before them on suspicion of noncon-

¹⁰ *Life of Parker*, 336.

formity, in any particular, were required to acknowledge the Queen as supreme governor of the Church, with unlimited power to decree rights and ceremonies ; to subscribe an unreserved profession of belief in the Thirty-nine Articles and Book of Common Prayer ; and if they had been guilty of any departure from perfect conformity by “not using such rites as by law and order were appointed,” a full confession of the fault was exacted, with an humble prayer for pardon, and an explicit promise, which had all the solemnity of an oath—“from henceforth in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, to use and observe the same.” This promise was extorted under penalty of deprivation, fine, imprisonment, and utter ruin of all professional prospects, while to add to the cruelty and wickedness of the whole proceedings, the poor victims were made to declare that all they did—confession of default, solicitation of pardon, subscription, and promise—was done voluntarily. “The which I do presently and willingly testify with the subscription of mine own hand !” Assuredly those were fearful times for honest men with honest consciences to live in !

Nor was it the clergy alone who were compelled to subscribe, or brave the penal consequences of a refusal. The laity who absented themselves from their parish churches, and attended Nonconformist meetings, were also summoned, and tendered a form of subscription which few could conscientiously take :—

“I acknowledge the Queen’s majesty to be chief governor of the Church of England, under Christ. That in the Book of Common Prayer there is nothing repugnant to the Word of God. That as the public preaching in this Church of England is sound, so the public administration of the sacraments is consonant to the Word of God. And whereas I have absented myself from my parish church, and have refused to join with the congregation in public prayer, and in receiving the sacrament, according to the public order set down, and my duty in that behalf, I am right sorry for it, and pray that this my fault may be pardoned ; and do

promise, that from henceforth I will frequent my parish church and join with the congregation there, as well in prayer as in the administration of the sacrament, according to such order as by public authority is set down and established ; and to witness this my promise I do hereunto willingly subscribe my name."—*MS.* p. 201, *quoted in Neal's Hist. of Puritans*, vol. i. p. 255.

Parties were esteemed fortunate who escaped by merely subscribing such a form as the above, without being mulcted in heavy fines, or arbitrarily imprisoned. Occasionally, however, men of unyielding integrity would refuse to subscribe what their consciences revolted against, and in dealing with such the conduct of the Royal Commissioners, as a rule, was not only imperious and insolent, but unjust and vituperative, profane and brutal. No station in life, it would appear, formed an exception to this rule, as witness the examination of a citizen of London, named White, before a commission consisting of the Lord Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, the Master of the Requests, Mr. Gerard, the Dean of Westminster, the Sheriff of London, and the Clerk of the Peace. White was accused of not attending his parish church, and he had been imprisoned in various jails for about a year, which was a favourite device for plundering prisoners, as heavy fees had to be paid in each jail :—

"*Lord Chief Justice.*—Who is this ?

"*White.*—White, an't please your honor.

"*L. C. J.*—White, as black as the devil !

"*White.*—Not so, my lord ; one of God's children.

"*L. C. J.*—Why will you not come to y^r parish church ?

"*White.*—My lord, I did use to frequent my parish church before my troubles, and procured several godly men to preach there, as well as in other places of preaching and prayer ; and since my troubles I have not frequented any private assemblies ; but as I have had leave and liberty have gone to my parish church ; and, therefore, those that presented me have done it out of malice.

"*Mr. Gerard.*—You have not usually frequented your own parish church.

"*White*.—I allow I have more used other places where I was better edified. . .

"*Master of Requests*.—What Scripture have you to ground your conscience against these arguments?

"*White*.—The whole Scriptures are for destroying idolatry, and everything that belongs to it. . .

"*Master of the Rolls*.—These are no part of idolatry, but are commanded by the prince for civil order, and if you will not be ordered you show yourself disobedient to the laws.

"*White*.—I would not willingly disobey any law, only I would avoid those things that are not warranted by the Word of God.

"*Master of Requests*.—These things are commanded by Act of Parliament, and in disobeying the laws of your country you disobey God.

"*White*.—I do it not of contempt but of conscience; in all other things I am an obedient subject.

"*L. C. J.*—Thou art a contemptuous fellow, and will obey no laws.

"*White*.—Not so, my lord, I do and will obey laws; and therefore refusing but a ceremony out of conscience, and not refusing the penalty for the same, I rest still a true subject.

"*L. C. J.*—The Queen's Majesty was overseen not to make you of her council, to make laws and orders for religion.

"*White*.—Not so, my lord; I am to obey laws warranted by God's Word.

"*L. C. J.*—Do the Queen's laws command anything against God's Word?

"*White*.—I do not so say, my lord.

"*L. C. J.*—Yes, marry, do you, and there I will hold you.

"*White*.—Only God and His laws are absolutely perfect: all men and their laws may err.

"*L. C. J.*—This is one of Shaw's darlings; I tell thee what, I will not say anything of affection, for I know thee not saving by this occasion; thou art the wickedest and most contemptuous person that has come before me since I sat in this commission.

"*White*.—Not so, my lord, my conscience witnesseth otherwise.

"*Master of Requests*.—What if the Queen commanded to wear a gray frieze gown, would you come to church then?

"*White*.—That were more tolerable, than that God's ministers should wear the habit of His enemies.

"*L. C. J.*—How if she should command to wear a fool's coat and a cock's comb?

"*White.*—That were very unseemly, my lord, for God's ministers.

"*Dean of Westminster.*—You will not be obedient to the Queen's commands?

"*White.*—I would only avoid those things that have no warrant in the Word of God, that are neither decent nor edifying, but fully the contrary, and are condemned by the foreign reformed Church.

"*L. C. J.*—You would have no laws.

"*White.*—If there were no laws, I would live a Christian and do no wrong; if I received any, so it were.

"*L. C. J.*—Thou art a rebel.

"*White.*—Not so, my lord, a true subject.

"*L. C. J.*—Yea, I swear by God, thou art a rebel; for thou wouldst draw thy sword, and lift up thy hand against the prince, if time served.

"*White.*—My lord, I thank God, my heart standeth right towards God and my prince; and God will not condemn, though your honor hath so judged. . .

"*L. C. J.*—You shall be committed, I warrant you.

"*White.*—Pray, my lord, let me have justice. I am unjustly committed; I desire a copy of my presentment.

"*L. C. J.*—You shall have your head from your shoulders; have him to the Gate-house.

"*White.*—I pray you to commit me to some prison in London, that I may be near my house.

"*L. C. J.*—No, sir, you shall go thither.

"*White.*—I have paid fines and fees in other prisons; send me not where I shall pay them over again.

"*L. C. J.*—Yes, marry, you shall; this is your glory.

"*White.*—I desire no such glory.

"*L. C. J.*—It will cost you twenty pounds, I warrant you, before you come out.

"*White.*—God's will be done."—*Hist. of Puritans*, i. 256.

Such was the course of justice and its mode of administration in those evil days. Not only were Nonconformists continually subject to persecution before the Bishops' Courts,

where they were heavily fined and imprisoned at pleasure, but they were also liable to be dragged before the Royal Commissioners and further oppressed as in the above case. The officers of those courts were paid by fees, and their rapacity was insatiable ; thus they all had a direct pecuniary interest in the number of the persecuted, and spies were employed to note those who absented themselves from their parish churches, or who visited parties in prison, and in this way the courts were kept employed and many families utterly ruined by the extortion of enormous fines. Some of the London Nonconformists, in the hope of being permitted to worship in peace, joined the French and Dutch Churches, whose service was conducted more after the Geneva model ; but Archbishop Parker brought the matter before the Queen in Council, and a pledge was exacted from these churches not to permit any English to join them.¹¹

Among foreign Protestants who sought refuge in England from persecution in their own country, there were none that suffered such barbarous injustice as the Anabaptists. We have seen how cruelly they were treated during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.; but in ruthless butchery Elizabeth was not to be surpassed by either. Prior to 1574 she had on three several occasions ordered all persons who held their opinions, whether foreigners or natives, to depart the kingdom within twenty days, under penalties of extreme severity. Grindal, whose views, with all their liberal tendencies towards Puritan Nonconformity, nevertheless largely partook of the arid, ungenial, intolerant sectarianism which disgraced the Reformation era, sacrificed the consistency of his own profession and character by heartily engaging in the persecution of the inoffensive Anabaptists. At his suggestion, when Bishop of London, domiciliary visits were ordered throughout the city in search of members of the proscribed sect, and every householder was

¹¹ Life of Parker, 364 ; Strype's *Annals*, ii. 284.

compelled to make a true return of the persons who lodged with him, specifying their occupations, religious principles and characters.¹²

Sandys, his successor in the See of London, was even more zealous in his endeavours to extirpate the Anabaptists. In 1574 he had sixteen of them arrested and banished the kingdom. The year following he broke into a private house where a number of them were assembled innocently for worship, and had twenty-seven of them arrested, including some women. The Queen—always eager to persecute independent Protestantism to the death—issued a special commission, directed to Sandys, to the Bishop of Worcester, the Master of the Rolls, and two others, for the trial of the parties on the charge of heresy. Some of the accused recanted the errors imputed to them, and performed penance at St. Paul's Cross by carrying fagots as symbolical of the punishment they deserved. Eleven were condemned to be burnt alive, nine of whom escaped so cruel a death and were transported, while two were doomed to horrible martyrdom in the fires of Smithfield.

The Queen was appealed to personally on behalf of the condemned, but she inherited a thirst for blood that extinguished the pity natural to her sex, and she would show no mercy.¹³ Foxe, the martyrologist, made a most forcible and eloquent appeal in a letter addressed directly to her, urging that the true spirit of Christianity was against such violent and horrible proceedings.

"I understand," he says, "there are some foreigners in England, condemned for heretical doctrines, and one or two of them doomed, unless reserved by y^r clemency, shortly to be burnt—to

¹² Strype's Grindal, 122—124.

¹³ "That the tenderness of her sex had no place in her breast, the cruelties she exercised, the blood she shed, clearly prove."—*Bogue and Bennett's Hist. of Dissenters*, vol. i. p. 67.

burn alive the bodies of the miserable creatures with fire and flames, pitch and sulphur, because they have erred, rather by the darkness of their understanding than by the impiety of their passions, *seems cruelly more after the example of Rome than the practice of the Gospel*; and unless it had originated with Innocent the Third, and the spirit of the Popes, this brazen bull had never been introduced into the merciful Church of Christ. Allow me, therefore, to entreat y^r Majesty to spare the life of these persons if you can (and what cannot your authority in these cases effect), or at least let their punishment be changed. Might they not be imprisoned, banished, or even hung; but I beseech you, *suffer not the long-extinguished fires of Smithfield to be again rekindled.*" —*Fuller's Church Hist.*, b. ix. p. 104.

But the Queen's heart was steeled against mercy. These unfortunates had committed the terrible crimes, in her eyes, of daring to think for themselves in religious matters, and to think differently, too, from what she, by her divine prerogative, had infallibly expounded as the true faith of Christ! What audacity in such wretches to set up the rights of conscience in opposition to her supreme authority! They were heretics to be cut off from the flock of Christ, of which she was the divine shepherdess! This was her view of the matter, and accordingly she issued a commission to Sir Nicholas Bacon, directing them to be cut off as rotten sheep, and burnt as heretics!

"They have," said this good Protestant, and merciful Queen—" *they have been justly declared heretics, and, therefore, as corrupt members, to be cut off from the rest of the flock of Christ*, lest they should corrupt others professing the true Christian faith. . . . We, therefore, according to regal function and office, minding the execution of justice in this behalf, require you to award and make out our writ of execution," &c.¹⁴ Accordingly, the martyrdom of these conscientious enthusiasts—who were wholly innocent of any legal, or

¹⁴ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xv. p. 740.

even moral crime—was consummated by a great Protestant *auto da fe* on the 22nd of July, 1575 !

The barbarous murder of these foreigners by the Queen naturally excited great indignation among their brethren in the Low Countries and Germany, while it revealed to the world the true nature of the Queen.

Brandt says—"This severity, which was not the first that had been practised in England since the Reformation, appeared to many Protestants, who were still under the cross in Flanders and Brabant, both strange and incredible. They lamented *that those who not long before had been persecuted themselves, were now harassing others for the sake of their religion, and offering violence, with fire and sword, to the consciences of other men*, though they had been taught, and with great truth, that *it did not belong to any mortal man to lord it over the consciences of others.*"—*Hist. of the Reformation in the Low Countries*, p. 230.

Archbishop Parker died two months before the burning alive of the Dutch martyrs, and Grindal was translated from York to Canterbury as his successor. A practice had grown up among earnest and pious clergymen, who were virtually Puritans, though still adhering to the Church, of assembling together for the discussion of passages of Scripture and other religious exercises. These meetings were called "prophesyings," and they were encouraged by some bishops who had Puritan sympathies. After Grindal had been some time in the Archiepiscopal See of Canterbury, the Queen became aware that he approved of and encouraged these "prophesyings," which she held to be in violation of her prerogative, and calculated to breed sedition. She forthwith addressed a vehement letter to all the Bishops, commanding them instantly to suppress such disorders in their respective dioceses, and, on no pretext whatever, to tolerate any more unlawful assemblies of the clergy.

Two or three Bishops reluctantly complied with the Queen's letter, but the rest cheerfully obeyed and "diligently and carefully put in execution" the imperious commands of their ecclesiastical superioress. To this servility, however, Grindal was at first an honourable exception. He refused to prohibit meetings which he believed were legal and profitable. He wrote a noble letter of expostulation to the Queen, in which he declared he was willing to resign his see rather than act in this matter against his conscience, and he pressed on her two requests for the good of the Church :—

"1.—That your Majesty would refer ecclesiastical matters to the Bishops and divines of the realm, according to the practice of the first Christian emperors

"2.—That when your Majesty deals in matters of faith and religion, you would not pronounce so peremptorily as you may do in civil matters ; but remember that in God's cause, His will, and not the will of any earthly creature, is to take place. It is the antichristian voice of the Pope, *sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas.*"

He then affirms that the "prophesyings" are legal, "forasmuch as by the canons and constitutions of the Church now in force, every Bishop has authority to appoint such exercises for inferior ministers, to increase their knowledge in the Scriptures as to him shall seem most expedient." To put a fitting cap on the climax of such audacious resistance to the imperious will of his "governess," he then went on to remind her, "that though she was a great and mighty princess, she was nevertheless a mortal creature, and accountable to God."

Such presumptuous and uncourtly language—so unusual from a Churchman's lips to the goddess of Church and State—inflamed the mind of the Queen so fiercely that the only wonder is the Archbishop did not lose his head on Tower Hill ! As it was she made an example of him, that demonstrated at once the woful state of degrading bondage to which

she had reduced the Church, and the unlimited despotism of the supremacy she exercised. She suspended the Archbishop from all the functions of his office for six months, and would doubtless have carried her resentment further had he not, before the expiration of that time, been induced to sue for pardon—to acknowledge the Queen's *mildness* and *gentleness*, and promise obedience for the future. But so implacable was the Queen that even such submission could not mollify her wrath, which contemplated his deprivation—an extreme step she was with difficulty dissuaded from taking.

The sequestration imposed on the Archbishop was continued, notwithstanding his submission, until about a year before his death, which took place in July, 1583, but he never was admitted to the Queen's favour. Her harshness, indeed, is said to have broken his spirit, and hurried him to the grave in the 63rd year of his age.

The Queen, however, effectually put down the private assemblies of the clergy, and riveted the chains of her supremacy tighter than ever on the Church. The Queen, says Neal, put down the prophesyings "chiefly because they enlightened the people's minds in the Scriptures, and encouraged their enquiries after truth; her Majesty being always of opinion that knowledge and learning in the laity would only endanger their peaceable submission to her absolute will and pleasure."—*Hist. of Purit.*, i. 288.

The men of that age were abject, indeed, beyond contempt, and scarcely deserved better treatment than they received, when they submitted their intellects and liberties so absolutely to the capricious will of a female tyrant, whose whole reign was an intolerable outrage on the natural rights and constitutional liberties of the people, and a perpetual insult to the manhood of the nation. When Parliament met in January, 1580, the Commons passed a resolution—

"That, as many of their members as conveniently could, should

on the Sunday fortnight, assemble and meet together in the Temple Church, there to have preaching, and to join together in prayer, with humiliation and fasting, for the assistance of God's spirit in all their consultations, during this Parliament; and for the preservation of the Queen's majesty, and her realms."—*Heylin*, 287; *D'Ewes*, 282.

When the Queen heard of this resolution she resented it as an invasion of her prerogative, and sent one of her favourites, the Vice-Chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton,¹⁵ whom she subsequently made Lord Chancellor, to tell the Commons—"She did much admire at so great a rashness in that House, as to put in execution such an innovation, without her privity and pleasure first made known to them." On the delivery of this insolent message all the spirit of Parliament evaporated, and thereupon it was moved that "the House should acknowledge their offence and contempt, and humbly crave forgiveness, with a full purpose to forbear committing the like for the future." To the disgrace of the servile representatives of the nation this resolution was passed.

¹⁵ This adventurer was first seen by the Queen at a ball given to her by the students of the Inns of Court. He had a prepossessing appearance, and danced so gracefully that he excited her jaded and errant fancy. She invited him to Court, lavished riches and honours on him, while treating him with the indecorous familiarity that had previously been enjoyed by Leicester. He had no legal qualifications for the Lord Chancellorship to which the caprice of the Queen elevated him, and was satirized as her "*Dancing Chancellor*." The poet Gray thus celebrates his influence with the Queen and the revelries over which he presided at Stoke House:—

Full oft within these spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My brave Lord Keeper led the brawls,
The Seal and Maces danced before him.

His bushy beard, and shoestrings green,
His high-crown'd hat and satin doublet,
Moved the stout head of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

To complete his accomplishments, he was a rapacious appropriator of church property and an unrelenting persecutor of Nonconformists.

When we find so mean and slavish a spirit animating the Englishmen of that day, it must be confessed that they were unworthy of a better Government than they had to endure. A general corruption destroyed the self-respect of almost every man who mixed in public life. The honest and the conscientious were those who crowded the jails of the country, and against whom the malignant spirit of persecution seldom slumbered. But, as Neal observes :

“Violent measures, instead of reconciling the Puritans to the Church, drove them farther from it. Men who act upon principles will not easily be beaten from them with the artillery of canons, injunctions, subscriptions, fines, imprisonments, &c., much less will they esteem a Church that fights with such weapons. Multitudes were by these methods carried off to a total separation, and so far prejudiced, as not to allow the Church of England to be a true Church, nor her ministers true ministers ; they renounced all communion with her, not only in the prayers and ceremonies, but in hearing the word and the sacraments.”—*Hist. of Purit.*, i. 301.

Had all the Bishops been equally rigorous and severe in expelling Nonconformists from among the clergy, more than half the pulpits in every diocese would have been idle ; for the body of the conforming clergy were so ignorant and illiterate, that many of them who had a cure of souls were incapable of preaching, or even of reading to the edification of the hearers ; being obliged by law only to read the service, and administer the sacrament in person *once in half a year*, on forfeiture of five pounds to the poor.¹⁶ In the presence of such a lamentable condition of affairs, some few among the Bishops who were truly desirous of having faithful and competent clergymen to minister to their people connived at their nonconformity, and in this way some Christian vitality was preserved in the Church.

But although a great deal of laxity was observed in the

¹⁶ Neal's *Hist. of Purit.*, i. 276.

enforcement of the penal laws, still the liberties and lives of the whole body of Nonconformists were left by those laws at the mercy of any malignant persecutor. As a rule those laws were made available more for plundering the property of Nonconformists and enriching their persecutors than for the barren satisfaction of taking their lives. But occasionally judicial murders were committed, as it were, to warn Nonconformists how precarious was their position, and by how slender a thread the sword was suspended over them.

June 4, 1583, a Protestant Dissenting Minister, the Rev. Elias Thacker, was condemned and hanged at St. Edmundsbury for nonconformity; and two days after the Rev. John Copping shared a similar fate. They were indicted under the 23 Eliz. c. i., for spreading seditious libels and for refusing the Oath of Supremacy.

Servile and corrupt judges who were always ready to do the bloody work of the Crown, held that to impeach the Book of Common Prayer, which was established by law, was an attack on the constitution of the Church, and a seditious proceeding. They also held that to acknowledge her Majesty's unlimited supremacy as a temporal sovereign, and not subscribe equally to her supremacy in religious matters, was a capital felony—an overt act of high treason that merited death.—*Strype's Annals*, vol. iii. p. 186.

Parliaments generally passed whatever murderous penal laws the Crown desired against Protestant and Catholic Nonconformists; but if Parliament failed in any particular, the judges were always ready to interpret the law in the most sanguinary spirit.

Whitgift, who had been rewarded with the Bishopric of Worcester for his opposition to Cartwright, was translated to the See of Canterbury on the death of Grindal; in hatred of Nonconformists he fully equalled Parker, while in a persistent zeal for persecution he far surpassed him. In making the ap-

pointment, the Queen urged him to sharpen the sword of the law, so as "*to restore the discipline of the Church, and the uniformity established by law, which, through the connivance of some prelates, the obstinacy of the Puritans, and the power of some noblemen, is run out of square.*"

Accordingly, the Archbishop set to work and framed three Articles, which he transmitted to all his suffragans, with positive injunctions that they should be rigorously enforced in the administration of their respective dioceses. One of these articles, the second, was especially framed against Puritanism. It commanded "that all preaching, reading, catechising, and other such like exercises in *private places and families*, whereunto others do resort, being not of the same family, *be utterly extinguished !*"¹⁷ These articles, he ordered, should be subscribed and observed by all ministers, equally as the Thirty-nine Articles established by law, which usurpation of authority had no legal warrant whatever, but was an act of tyrannical oppression as gross as any that brought Laud's head to the block.

But Whitgift was not troubled with any scruples about the legality of his acts, and he set out on his first visitation, resolved that his Articles should be tendered to all who held office or benefice in the Church, and that those who refused to subscribe should be suspended. "Many good and pious men strained their consciences on this occasion," says Neal, "some subscribed the Articles with this protestation in open court—as far as they are agreeable to the Word of God ; and others *dempto secundo*—that is, taking away the second. Many, upon better consideration, repented their subscribing in this manner, and would have rased out their names, but it was not permitted."¹⁸

In the Archiepiscopal Province of Canterbury, however, there were found not less than *two hundred and thirty-three clergy-*

¹⁷ Strype's Life of Whitgift, vol. i. 229.

¹⁸ Hist. of Purit., i. 323.

men who refused to subscribe the Articles—nobly preferring to brave all consequences rather than outrage conscience by a deliberate act of meanness and falsehood. These faithful ministers were suspended, deprived of their means of living, and cast forth by a Church that was not worthy of them to fight the hard battle of life as best they could. Many who were married and had families endured great suffering, but there was no mercy for them.¹⁹

Yet Whitgift found he had not inquisitorial power enough, and urged the Queen to issue a new ecclesiastical commission, because, as he alleged, the Court of High Commission may order a search for seditious books, examine the writers or publishers on oath, apply the torture, punish by fines, or by imprisonment at discretion, while Bishops cannot do these things; therefore, argued this intolerant Churchman, the whole ecclesiastical law is but a carcass without a soul, unless it be quickened by the commission.²⁰

Ever ready to second the persecuting zeal of her Prelates when directed against Protestant Nonconformists, the Queen ordered a new high commission to issue under the great seal; and this formidable instrument of despotism was accordingly brought into play in December, 1583. This was the sixth time the High Commission Court had been established under the Tudors, and its existence was an outrage on the constitution. The extraordinary powers conferred on it by the mere prerogative of the Crown, were not only unknown to the law, but in many respects were in direct violation of the law, and it was a tribunal in no one respect less iniquitous in its constitution,

¹⁹ Besides the 233 in the province of Canterbury thus cut off from the Church, there were great numbers in the diocese of Peterborough, in the city of London, and proportionably in other counties; some of whom were dignitaries in the Church, and most of them graduates in the University.—*Life of Whitgift*, 129; *Neal's Hist. of Purit.*, i. 323.

²⁰ *Life of Whitgift*, p. 134.

or atrocious in its proceedings, than the Papal Inquisition.²¹ Of this tribunal, Hallam observes that—

“Master of such tremendous machinery, the Archbishop proceeded to call into action one of its powers contained *for the first time* in the present commission, by tendering what is technically styled the oath *ex-officio* to such of the clergy as were surmised to harbour a spirit of puritanical disaffection. This procedure, which was wholly founded on the canon law, consisted in a series of interrogations, so comprehensive as to embrace the whole scope of clerical uniformity, yet so precise and minute as to leave no room for evasion, to which the suspended party was bound to answer upon oath. So repugnant was this to the rules of our English law and to the principles of natural equity, that no species of ecclesiastical tyranny seems to have excited so much indignation.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 202.

The total number of articles, containing interrogations, all of which were to be answered on oath, was twenty-four, and are given at length by Neal—*Hist. of Puritans*, i. 337, 338, 339.

Lord Burghley on reading them wrote to the Archbishop—“I have read over your twenty-four articles, formed in Romish style, of great length and curiosity, to examine all ministers in this time, without distinction of persons, to be executed *ex officio mero*, and I find them so curiously penned, so full of branches and circumstances, that I think the Inquisition of Spain used not so many questions to entrap their priests.”—*Strype's Whitgift*, 157—160; *Neal's Puritans*, i. 339.

With such extreme severity did the Archbishop, aided by Aylmer, Bishop of London, employ the excessive powers of

²¹ The Lord Treasurer Burghley, who was in many things as liberal as his interests allowed him to be, writing to the Archbishop, said of the High Commission Court—“According to my simple judgment this kind of proceeding is too much savouring the Romish Inquisition, and is rather a device to seek for offenders, than to reform any.”—*Fuller's Church Hist.*, b. ix. p. 155.

this High Commission Court, that the Lords of Council took occasion to interfere, so numerous were the complaints, and so great the public outcry against the intolerable proceedings of those Protestant Inquisitors. Writing to them, the Lords say :—

“ They had heard of sundry complaints out of divers counties, of proceedings against a great number of ecclesiastical persons, some parsons, some vicars, some curates, but all preachers ; some deprived, some suspended by their lordships’ officers, chancellors, &c., but that they had taken no notice of these things, hoping their lordships would have stayed their hasty proceedings, especially such as did earnestly instruct the people against Popery.

“ But, now of late hearing of great numbers of zealous and learned preachers suspended from their cures, &c., and that there is no preaching, prayers or sacraments in most of the vacant places ; that in some few of them persons neither of learning nor of good name are appointed ; and that in other places of the country, great numbers of persons that occupy cures, *are notoriously unfit ; most for lack of learning ; many chargeable with great and enormous faults*, as drunkenness, filthiness of life, gaming at cards, haunting of alehouses, &c., against whom they (the Lords of Council) heard of no proceedings, but that they were quietly suffered.”—*Life of Whitgift*, p. 160.

Availing themselves of the opportunity, the Lords proceeded to rebuke the scandalous partiality of the prelates in punishing learned and “ godly men ” for a few points of ceremonial, and winking at the great abuses that corrupted the Church and destroyed its usefulness. Against “ the unlearned and vicious ” persons, against “ pluralists and non-residents,” the Lords say they “ have heard of no inquisition, but of great diligence and extreme usage against those that were known to be diligent preachers.” They therefore urge the inquisitorial prelates to have “ some charitable consideration, that people may not be deprived of the diligent, learned, and zealous pastors, for a few points of ceremonial which entangled their consciences.”

The Lords of Council were divided into cliques, which were constantly intriguing against each other to gain a monopoly of the Queen's favour and ascendancy in the Council. Among the Lords some favoured the Puritans, some the Roman Catholics, a few were for liberal and tolerant laws as a matter of abstract principle, but, as a general rule, the court and prelatial cliques were the most powerful.

The prelates, however, always met with some resistance in their corrupt and persecuting policy from statesmen, who, like Burghley and Walsingham, were not only largely tolerant, but desired to curb sacerdotal influences, and keep ecclesiastical pretensions in subjection to the civil power. Thus on many occasions—such as in the letter of September 20, 1584—we find the Lords of Council reprehending Church abuses, and reproving the ungodly zeal of the prelates. The Lords, indeed, would have gone with the Parliament in pushing reforms to great lengths, were it not that all the iniquities in Church and State found in the Queen an unscrupulous, constant, and stern protectress.

Secure in the countenance and support of the Queen, the Archbishop and his co-inquisitors—notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Lords of Council—continued to persecute nonconformity, while they cherished the rank corruptions of the Church. To the Parliament that met in November, 1584, the persecuted earnestly appealed for protection, and the most strenuous exertions were made by the whole Puritan party and their friends, to effect such a reformation in the Church as would free conscience from the shackles of superstitious rites and ceremonies.

For various reasons Parliament was well disposed to restrain the arrogance of the prelates, and redress some of the more glaring abuses that disfigured the Church. The House of Commons approved of a Bill “concerning the subscription of Ministers,” which would have deprived the Queen and the

prelates of power to frame other articles than those sanctioned by Parliament, and also adopted sixteen articles for reformation, which, in conjunction with the House of Lords, they presented to the Queen ; while, pending her decision, a Bill to abolish *Pluralities* and prohibit *Non-residence* was brought in, and met with general support.

The Puritans had a majority of friends in this Parliament. Fuller says their agents were soliciting at the door of the House of Commons all day, and making interest in the evening at the chambers of Parliament men ; and if the Queen had taken the advice of her two Houses they had been made easy.—*Hist. of Church*, b. ii. p. 173. But the Queen was not amenable to good advice on scarcely any subject of private conduct or of State policy, much less was she tolerant of advice on matters touching her ecclesiastical supremacy and government of the Church.

The Archbishop at once took alarm at the manifestation of such a spirit in the Commons. He represented to the Queen how dangerous it would be to tamper with such a spirit of innovation as was evidently at work in the Commons. The Bill against *Pluralities* and *Non-residence* he affirmed was fraught with fearful calamities. He wrote the Queen that it—

“Impeacheth your Majesty’s prerogative ; lesseneth the revenues of the crown ; overthroweth the study of divinity in both universities ; will deprive men of the livings they lawfully possess ; will beggar the clergy ; will bring in a base and unlearned ministry ; lessen the hospitality of Cathedrals ; be an encouragement to students to go over to foreign seminaries, where they may be better provided for ; and, in a word, will make way for anarchy and confusion.—*Life of Whitgift*, p. 193.

Such, nearly three hundred years ago, was the rhapsodical defence of the scandalous corruptions engendered by the alliance between Church and State, and as wildly, as incoherently, and as unreasonably has that defence been continued down to the present day. The great argument used by the

Archbishop to influence the Queen, on all occasions, against Parliamentary interference with Church affairs was, that such matters were exclusively within the scope of her royal prerogative—that if she suffered the invasion of her prerogative in so important a branch as the Church, there was no saying where so daring and dangerous a spirit of innovation would stop, and that if any reforms or alterations should be really needed, she could have them effected herself by framing a canon, and not by statute, and thus be relieved from the presumptuous obtrusiveness of Parliament. By thus craftily pandering to the despotic humour of the Queen, the wily Archbishop effectually counteracted all the efforts that were made to correct abuses, and make the Church not sectarian but national. The Queen, however, was as eager as the Archbishop could desire to maintain her high prerogative, and rebuke what she regarded as the intermeddling impertinences of Parliament with matters which, as she affirmed, did not concern, or lie within the province of either House. She sent the Lord Treasurer Burghley to reprimand the Commons for presuming to encroach upon her supremacy, and for attempting what she had forbidden; and she ordered him “to command the Speaker, in her name, to see that no Bills touching reformation in causes ecclesiastical should be exhibited, and, if any such were exhibited, he was, upon his allegiance, not to read them!”

A member of the House of Commons, Morice, attorney of the Court of Wards, attacked the *ex-officio oath* as totally illegal, and brought in a Bill to declare it so. This Bill the Queen also violently suppressed, and had Morice sent to prison, to punish his boldness, and check the inclination to such forwardness in others!

To follow up his triumph over the independence of Parliament, and in preserving intact the scandals of the Church, the Archbishop—whose proceedings had been assailed in

pamphlets—got the Queen to sanction the imposition of additional restraints on the Press. These restraints were not embodied in a statute passed by the legal estates of the realm, but were unconstitutionally and tyrannically imposed by a decree of the Star Chamber, which, like the other acts of despotism the Tudors committed, had no moral claim on the allegiance of loyal subjects other than what sound expediency dictates—that submission becomes a duty when reasonable prospects of successful resistance do not present themselves.

This decree prohibited the setting up of any printing presses in private places, and only allowed them to exist in London, and in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge! To set up a new press even in London, required a licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London, and all printing was forbidden without previous authorization in each case obtained in accordance with the Queen's injunctions. The observance of this decree was enforced by heavy penalties, but its very severity defeated the object in view. The demand for prohibited works naturally increased throughout the kingdom, by the operations of a law which neither tyrants nor their decrees can control. Hence, such a barbarous edict, instead of having the effect of destroying the unlicensed press of England, had quite an opposite tendency—it increased the demand for the illegal productions of that press, and thus made its working more profitable, though surrounded by difficulties and dangers, which, however, never yet stood in the way of supplying prohibited articles.²²

To the Parliament that met in October, 1586, another appeal was made by the Puritans for justice, but, as usual,

²² Another effect of this decree was to embitter controversy. Had the Press been free, *Martin Mar-Prelate* would have had no patronage for his fierce vituperation and unmeasured scurrility, which, though not justified by taste, was certainly provoked by oppression.

without effect. In support of their case they presented a carefully-prepared survey of the Church, showing that while expelling learned, able, and pious ministers from her service, *the Bishops made priests of the basest of the people*, and that after having existed for twenty-eight years under the fostering care of a good Protestant Queen, as an established State Church, *there were no less than eight thousand parishes in England without preaching ministers!*" Fenner, in his *Answer to Dr. Bridges*, p. 48, says, "If persons would hear a sermon, they must go in some places 5, 7, 12, yea, in some counties, 20 miles, and at the same time be fined 12d. for being absent from their own parish church, though it be proved they were hearing a sermon elsewhere, because they had none at home."

The *Survey* contains in separate columns the names of the benefices in each county, their yearly value, the number of souls, the names of the incumbents, and their "conversation." In this last column there is such information respecting character as the following—"He liveth as a pot-companion"—"*A common dicer, burnt in the hand for felony, and full of iniquity*"—"Covetous; a pluralist—non-resident; his curate an ignorant man." Such men were troubled with no scruples about conformity—they subscribed anything; while the learned and gifted, the pious and the conscientious, were subjected to grievous oppression, and driven out of the Church by the persecution of the Queen and her Prelates.

No more significant comment could be offered on the barbarous and unchristian policy of the Queen than such a condition of affairs suggests.²³

The Queen, however, remained firm in her opposition to any correction of Church abuses or redress of grievances; and the Nonconformists continued to suffer cruel oppression, until the lowering clouds of the Spanish invasion began to fill the minds

²³ MS., p. 206, Neal's Hist. of Puritans, i. 382.

of the persecutors with alarm. Then, indeed, a temporary relaxation, dictated by fear, took place, and the action of the penal code was virtually suspended.

In that hour of stupendous national peril it was that the Nonconformists, Catholic as well as Protestant, demonstrated how true they remained to the interests of their country notwithstanding the iniquity of its Government. Their position was most anomalous. They were practically excluded from the rights and liberties of free-born Englishmen. Atrocious laws, and their even more atrocious administration, together with the overthrow of all legal and constitutional safeguards by the usurpations of the Crown, left their liberties, their properties, and their lives at the mercy of rapacious and remorseless persecutors. They saw in the Queen and her prelates merciless oppressors, whose hands were crimsoned with the blood of men and women who had endured martyrdom for conscience' sake. Under such circumstances it would not have been surprising if the Catholics had looked to the success of Philip for deliverance, while the Protestant Nonconformists might, not unreasonably, have concluded that, in the event of his success, their lot could scarcely be much worse than it was under Elizabeth.²⁴

But to their high honour be it remembered that Nonconformists of every class, forgetful of all injuries, came forward with a promptitude and zeal that attested their self-sacrificing devotion as loyal subjects, and which merited a different reward from what they received when all danger had passed away. For no sooner, indeed, had the elements saved the country from invasion by the destruction of the Armada, than the dissipation of their fears was followed by a renewed desire on the part of the Queen, and the faction that ruled in Church

²⁴ "She had played fast and loose so often with the Protestants," says Froude, "that, but for the interests of their common religion, they would long ago have fallen off from her."—*Hist. of Eng.*, vol. x. p. 349.

and State, to atone for a temporary leniency by a persecution fiercer than ever.

In the last chapter we noticed the rewards the Catholics received for their loyalty and patriotism in so portentous a crisis, and the Protestant Nonconformists were doomed to experience no better treatment. Calculating on an acknowledgment of their services, they petitioned Parliament for some slight concessions to justice. The Commons, indeed, were anxious enough to make concessions, and even went so far as to pass a Bill for the abolition of pluralities and non-residence, which they sent to the Lords, when the prelates again appealed to the Queen for protection. She was their Governess, their Protectress, nay, their Goddess ! and as such they addressed her *O ! dea certe !* in whom alone they had hope and trust, to prevent a reformation that would lay unhallowed hands on even one gross abuse—that would obliterate even one foul blot—free the Church from even one vile source of corruption, and thereby make it somewhat less of a national scandal. The Goddess thus invoked promptly interposed, and, to mark her displeasure, she sent the most prominent among the independent members of the Commons to the Tower.²⁵

In this spirit the Queen continued to rule in Church and State until her death, and it but faintly expresses the wickedness of her government to say, that seldom indeed did the country groan under a more corrupt and demoralizing despotism. She did not respect even the shadow of the ancient rights and constitutional liberties upon which Englishmen prided themselves. She imperiously triumphed over Parliament, imprisoned its members at pleasure, prohibited the correction even of civil abuses ; while as to liberty of speech, she haughtily told the Commons “it was not to be suffered that every one was to speak what he listeth, or what cometh into his brain to utter ; *their privilege was aye or no !*”—an in-

²⁵ D'Ewes' Journal, 410.

solent speech that virtually embodied the whole policy which brought the first Charles to the block, and made the second James a fugitive outcast.

Sir Edward Hobby brought in a Bill to prevent certain exactions made for their own profit by the officers of the Exchequer; for which he was rebuked, as he complained in his place, "by some great personage." The Bill, however, was passed and sent to the Lords, with another to restrain the flagrant abuses of purveyance, when the Queen directly interposed, and told the Lords she disliked such meddling with abuses which, if they existed, it was her prerogative to repress.—*D'Ewes*, 440, 443, *et post*.

As for liberty of speech, Parliament submitted to be muzzled, and would not venture to protect its members. Wentworth, one of the most independent members of the House of Commons, for daring to exercise his privileges was committed by the Queen to prison, where he remained for some years.—*Heylin's Hist. Presb.*, 319; *D'Ewes*, 470.

Morice, another able and spirited member of the House, for bringing in a Bill to reform the awful abuses of the ecclesiastical court, was ordered by the Queen into custody, but imprisonment could not quench his ardent spirit. He wrote a noble letter to Lord Burghley, in which he expressed his determination "to strive while his life should last, for freedom of conscience, public justice, and the liberties of his country."—*Lodge's Illustrations*, vol. iii. p. 34.

Men like Wentworth and Morice, with the Nonconformist martyrs, were the true pioneers of British constitutional liberty, civil and religious—it is their memory that, despite all their failings, the gratitude of posterity ought to embalm.

But the mere abnegation of the liberties of the nation could not satisfy the cruel disposition of the Queen—blood also flowed freely. Every offence against the supremacy of the Queen, as the Goddess of Church and State, was made, either

directly or indirectly, a capital felony. If the statute law was not explicit and clear enough to warrant condemnation, corrupt judges were ever ready to deliver interpretations in obedience to the wishes of the Crown. Thus unlicensed printing and publishing, or vending or distributing, were capital felonies; while the principles of Nonconformity were, with ready servility, construed into such a denial of the high prerogatives of the Crown, as involved an impeachment of the Queen's sovereignty, and in this way the new crime of constructive treason was manufactured.²⁶

But as if the hands of the persecutors were not sufficiently strengthened for evil, the Parliament that assembled in 1592 was commanded, in the most arbitrary and offensive manner, by the Queen to pass "*some sharp laws*" to compel attendance at church. Accordingly, the House of Commons—always humble and servile in proportion to the grossness of the insults heaped on them—enacted a most iniquitous law, entitled "An Act for the punishment of persons obstinately refusing to come to church, and persuading others to impugn the Queen's authority in ecclesiastical causes."

This Act was directed exclusively against Protestant Nonconformists, all of whom above the age of sixteen years were required to attend their parish churches at least once a month, under pain of imprisonment without bail. But if within three months after conviction offenders refuse to sign a declaration of submission—such as conscientious Nonconformists could not sign without compromising themselves—"then they shall *abjure the realm, and go into perpetual banishment.*" And if they do not depart within the time limited, or if they return at

²⁶ Sir Richard Knightly and other gentlemen were heavily fined by the Star Chamber for giving shelter to one of the secret travelling presses, while at the same time a number of other more humble persons were doomed to death. It would fill a volume to give an account of all the judicial murders that were committed in this sanguinary reign—and all, too, *under the abominable pretence of supporting the Protestant religion*

any time without the Queen's license, *then they shall suffer death without benefit of clergy!* Thus, as the Rev. Dr. Warner says in his remarks on this infamous law :—

“ Thus in some measure were renewed the days of Henry VIII., when it was a crime against the State to depart ever so little from the religion of the sovereign ; *but in some parts of this Act she exceeded her father's tyranny.* For absolute as he was, he contented himself with punishing such as opposed the established religion by some overt act. But by this new statute, the subjects were obliged to make an open profession by a constant attendance on the established service.—*Ecclesiast. Hist.*, ii. p. 465.

The severe execution of this statute, with that of the 23rd Eliz. c. i., observes Neal, “ brought infinite mischiefs upon the kingdom, in this and the following reigns ; many families being forced into banishment, some put to death, as in cases of treason, and others as the authors of seditious pamphlets.”²⁷

At this time the Protestant Nonconformists had branched off into various separate communities. There was a numerous party of moderate Puritans who, by occasional conformity, evaded the penalties of the law ; but there were also complete separatists, who made it a matter of conscience to renounce all communion with the State Church as an anti-Christian institution. The enthusiasm of these Protestants enabled them to endure the terrible sufferings to which they were exposed, for there was little mercy extended to such as remained obdurate. No cruelty was left unpractised to torture them into an outward, a sham conformity, which was all that the Queen or her inquisitors cared about. “ If I attend Church,” said a Dissenting Minister before the Court of High Commission, “ I should dissemble and play the hypocrite, for I should do it to avoid trouble, as I think it utterly unlawful.” “ *Come to Church and obey the Queen's laws,*” replied one of the High Commissioners, “ *and be a dissembler, be a hypocrite, or a devil if thou wilt !*”²⁸

²⁷ Hist. of Purit., vol. i. p. 427.

²⁸ Strype's Annals, vol. alb. p. 134.

To refuse such a command was to invite the full vengeance of that barbarous tribunal which rivalled, in death-torturing cruelties, its Romish model. Loathsome as the ordinary jails were, imprisonment in them came to be considered too good for such hardened contumacious Protestants, and they were "shut up in close rooms, not being allowed the liberty of the prison ; here they died like rotten sheep ; some of the disease of the prison ; some for want ; and others of infectious distempers."²⁹

"These bloody men," says Mr. Barrowe, a barrister, referring to the commissioners in his supplication presented to the Lords of Council, "*will allow us neither meat, drink, fire, lodging, nor suffer any whose hearts the Lord would stir up for our relief, to have access to us.*"

"*That which we crave for us all is the liberty to die openly, or live openly, in the land of our nativity ; if we deserve death let us not be closely murdered, yea, starved to death with hunger and cold, and stifled in loathsome dungeons.*" The numbers who thus suffered a lingering, torturing death, and were as truly murdered as if executed on Tower Hill, or burnt alive in Smithfield, cannot be correctly known. A moderate estimate makes them exceed by many hundreds all who suffered for conscience sake during the reign of Mary.

Among the more prominent martyrs whose blood crimsoned this reign, were the nonconforming ministers Greenwood and Penry, who were executed as felons ; Udal suffered martyrdom in prison ; Barrowe of Gray's Inn, and Bellot, a gentleman, were butchered at Tyburn ; while numerous others of less note met with an equally cruel fate. Of these martyrs Neal says :—

"At the place of execution they gave such testimonies of their unfeigned piety towards God, and loyalty to the Queen, praying so earnestly for her long and prosperous reign, that when Dr. Rey-

²⁹ Neal's Hist. of Purit., i. 430.

nolds, who attended them, repeated their behaviour to her Majesty, she repented that she had yielded to their death."—*Hist. of Purit.*, i. 436.

If, however, any such impression was made on the obdurate nature of the Queen, it was only temporary, though the tide of popular sympathy ran strongly in favour of the persecuted. The Queen, the Court, the Bishops, and the High Commissioners had to endure the odium such butcheries naturally excited; and the cause of Nonconformity was never stronger in the city of London than when the axe of the executioner was most ruthlessly employed.

During the last few years, however, of the Queen's reign, there was a comparative lull in the rage of persecution. This was owing to several causes. Aylmer, Bishop of London, one of the most bloody-minded of Elizabeth's prelates, died in 1594, and was succeeded by Fletcher, Bishop of Worcester, who was well-disposed to follow in his footsteps, but he incurred the unappeasable displeasure of the Queen for marrying a second wife, and though he filled all the prisons of London with Nonconformists, he was not able to push his zeal so far as the public sacrifice of human life.³⁰

This arose mainly from the declining health of the Queen, and the fact that her destined successor was a Scotch Presbyterian, whose sympathies were naturally assumed to be with the persecuted. "The Bishops were cautious of acting against a party for whom his Majesty had declared, not knowing what revenge he might take when he was fixed on the throne; and

³⁰ Fletcher after his second marriage was never admitted to the presence of the Queen, who suspended him for six months, which, it is alleged, so preyed on his haughty spirit, that he languished and died in the following year. His successor, Bancroft, was a "great adversary of the Puritans;" but the circumstances referred to in the text made him comparatively harmless during the remainder of this reign, for which he made amends by his zeal as a persecutor in the next.

the Puritans were quiet, in hope of great matters to be done for them upon the expected change."³¹

The last days of the haughty Queen were most miserable. A listless melancholy preyed on her spirit, relieved at times by passionate fits of jealous suspicions which had tormented her throughout life, and continued to torture her last moments, while occasionally she appeared as if helplessly abandoned to some great and absorbing remorse.

Sir John Harrington, writing to Sir Hugh Portman, describes a visit he paid the Queen, October 9, 1601. "In good sooth I feared her Majesty more than the rebel Tyrone. She is quite disfavoured, and unattired, and these troubles waste her much. She disregardeth every costlie cover that cometh to the table, and taketh little but manchets and succory potage. Every new message from the city doth disturb her, and she frowns on all the ladies. . . . She walks much in the privy chamber, and stamps with her feet at ill news, and thrusts her rusty sword at times into the arras in great rage."—*Nuga Antiqua*, vol. i. p. 317.

Writing to his wife from court, December 27, 1602, Sir John says—"It was not many days since I was bidden to her presence. I blest the happy moment, and found her in a most pitiable state. She said, 'thou seest my bodilie meet doth not suit me well: I have eaten but one ill-tasted cake since yesternight.'"—*Ibid.*, i. 322.

One of the Court, writing to a nobleman in Scotland for the information of King James, says:—"She sleepeth not so much by day as she used, neither taketh rest at night. Her delight is to sit in the dark, and sometimes, with shedding tears, to bewail Essex."—*Birch*, vol. ii. p. 506.

At last she died, on the 24th of March, 1603, and with her terminated the line of the Tudors.

Elizabeth died unlamented, save by the faction that was

³¹ Neal's Hist. of Purit., vol. i. p. 463.

directly interested in the manifold abuses and corruptions of her administration. She had survived her popularity, which, great at one time, gradually passed away under the profligacy, the demoralization, and the iron tyranny of her rule.

Personally her character had no traits of amiability. She was a coarse talker, a passionate shrew, and a profane swearer. Her favourite oath was "By God's son." She had no love of justice—no womanly sympathies—no appreciation of what was due to the feelings of others. She was a stern, selfish egotist, cruel and vindictive, with a masculine dash of courage that harmonised well with her unfeeling nature. That she had mental abilities and accomplishments far above the average of her sex is nothing to the purpose, when they were prostituted to the service of her evil passions.

A Protestant clergyman says :—"I cannot but observe with equal indignation and sorrow that Elizabeth seems to have been, in her capacities of wickedness, a woman exceedingly wicked ; to have united equally the sexual and the malignant corruptions of mankind in her own person ; to have had them both in a very violent degree ; to have superadded the highest degree of hypocrisy to both ; and so to have been a very prodigy of wickedness from all."—*The Rev. Dr. Whitaker's Vindication, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 517.

Lingard's censure on Elizabeth for her indifference respecting her mother's memory is not undeserved. Her conduct in this respect contrasts most unfavourably with that of Mary, who, when she came to the throne, with a laudable filial piety, had the foul acts that sanctioned the injustice her mother suffered repealed.

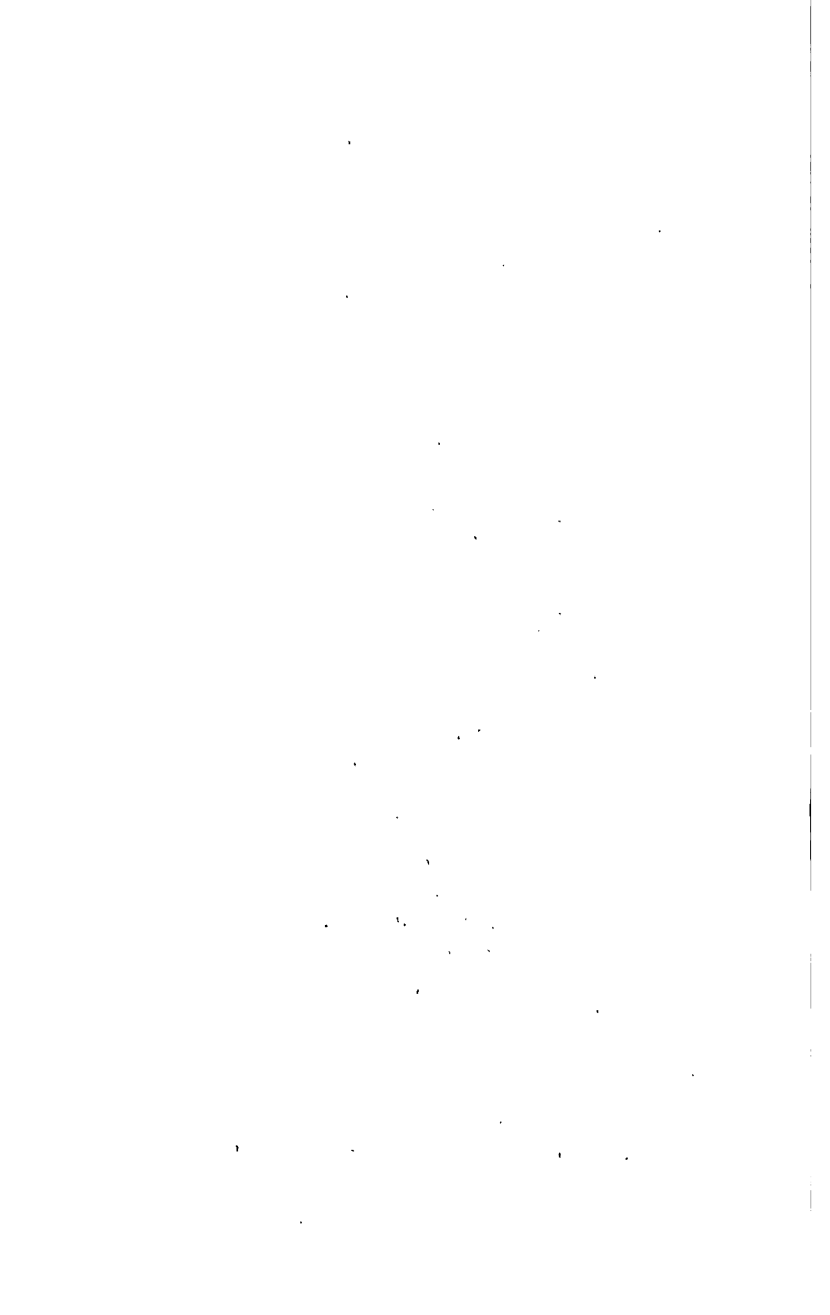
With respect to the guilt of Anne Boleyn, it was only alleged to justify the brutal lust of a tyrant. "*No impartial person,*" says Von Raumer, "*now entertains a doubt of her innocence.*"—*Political Hist.*, i. 49. "I say, with Bishop Godwin, without casting too much doubt on the credibility of public documents,

even a resolution of the Parliament against her would not convince me."—*Ibid.*, i. 112. Judgments of courts and verdicts of juries, even resolutions of Parliament in those days, are utterly inadmissible and worthless as conclusive evidence of guilt. Parliaments, juries, and judges were alike amenable to the paramount influences of corruption or intimidation. Soame says, "according to the best decision which *impartial posterity can come to*, Anne's death is *as scandalous a legal murder as ever disgraced a Christian country*."—*Hist. of the Reform.*, vol. ii. p. 121.

It is, however, with Elizabeth's ecclesiastical policy that we are mainly concerned, and its severest condemnation lies in the fact that, notwithstanding all the iniquitous laws she enacted, all the ruthless oppressions she practised, all the lives she sacrificed, and all the blood she shed during her long reign of four-and-forty years, that policy proved a miserable failure.

She carried woful suffering, desolation, and death into every quarter of England—breaking up happy homesteads, ruining families, separating their members, filling the prisons with honest men to be martyred by jail pestilence, driving some into banishment to die in foreign lands, dooming others to the death of felons, or consigning their tortured bodies to feed the fires of Smithfield—all this she did because she, a vain, fickle, imperious woman, arrogantly assumed the prerogatives of Deity, would tyrannically compel the intellect of the nation to fashion its religious belief and worship as she might capriciously and wantonly dictate. As Neal observes:—

"She understood not the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and is, therefore, justly chargeable with persecuting principles. More sanguinary laws were made in her reign than in any of her predecessors; her hands were stained with the blood of Papists and Puritans; the former were executed for denying her supremacy, and the latter for sedition or nonconformity. Her greatest admirers blame her for plundering the Church of its revenues, and for keeping several sees vacant many





years together for the sake of their profits ; as the bishoprics of Ely, Oxford, and others ; which last was without a bishop for twenty-two years.”—*Hist. of Purit.*, vol. i. p. 472.

An able and impartial ecclesiastical historian, Dr. Warner, denounces the severity with which she treated her Protestant subjects by her High Commission Court as “against law, against liberty, and against the right of human nature,” and adds :—

“If these are not flagrant instances of weakness and misrule to which her ministers never encouraged, but oftentimes dissuaded her as far as they durst, and which were not owing to sudden starts of passion, but to her own tyrannical disposition, then all arbitrary power may be defended as just and lawful. . . The determinations of this Court (the Star Chamber) were not according to any statute law of the land, *but according to the Queen's will and pleasure*; yet they were as binding upon the subject as an act of Parliament, which the whole nation exclaimed against, as a mark of the vilest slavery.”—*Ecclesiastical Hist.*, vol. ii. pp. 463, 474.

It is in the nature of things that a policy of blood never can be successful unless carried out to the extent of utter extermination.³² So with the ecclesiastical policy of Elizabeth—it was wicked, merciless, and bloody to a fearful extent, and yet not successful, because to have exterminated the Nonconformists, Protestant and Catholic, would have necessitated the slaughter or banishment of more than two-thirds of the whole population of England. This was a sacrifice that even Elizabeth dare not contemplate, and thus the policy of cruelty and blood which she followed was crime committed in vain.

“It is manifest,” observes Hallam, “that the obstinacy of bold and sincere men is not to be quelled by any punishments that do not exterminate them, and that they were not likely to entertain a less conceit of their own reason when they found no arguments so much relied on to refute it as that of force.”—*Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 226.

The primary object of the Queen was, as regards faith and worship, to force, under her supreme Popeship, the national conscience into an outward hypocritical conformity with such articles, creeds, ceremonies, and rites as she, in the exercise of her assumed infallibility might be pleased to approve, and the only result was that she succeeded in developing irreconcilable differences, in making breaches that became irreparable, and in demonstrating that the uniformity she sought was, even if desirable, impossible. She did more too; she established *the right to Dissent* in the mind and heart of the nation so firmly, that no subsequent tyranny could eradicate it.

While this was the case with Dissent, the Church of the State—to sustain which she committed so much crime—withered and shrunk under her blighting patronage. When she ascended the throne there was not one Protestant Dissenting Minister in England, nor one native congregation of Protestant Dissenters; but when her career had terminated, there were more than fifteen hundred learned, able, zealous, and pious ministers, whose fidelity had been tested by the ordeal of persecution, and to whose noble self-sacrifice we are indebted for the preservation of the true principles of Protestantism in the country. Protestant dissent was an established fact, and there were numerous congregations, not only in London, but also in every part of England. Such were the results that persecution accomplished.³³

³³ "The Church of England was not left by Elizabeth in circumstances that demanded applause for the policy of her rulers. After forty years of constantly aggravated molestation of the nonconforming clergy, their numbers were become greater, their enmity to the established order more irreconcilable."—*Hallam's Const. Hist. of Eng.*, i. 226.

CONCLUSION.

FROM the sketch we have now completed of the ecclesiastical policy of the Tudors, it is apparent that the establishment of the Protestant Church in England, as a State institution, was attended with calamities to the nation of appalling character and magnitude.

We have seen how, in the first instance, the usurpations of kingcraft employed the superstitions of religion as a powerful engine of State policy ; and how, after Christianity became the professed religion of the Roman Empire, the ecclesiastical prerogatives which had been exercised by the Pagan Emperors were assumed by their Christian successors.

We have seen how the aspiring pretensions of the Popes came into conflict with the ecclesiastical prerogatives usurped by the sovereigns of Europe, and that, as regards England, a contest of centuries was terminated by the 8th Henry successfully asserting the absolute supremacy of the Crown in ecclesiastical, as in civil matters, within the realm.

We have seen, too, how in delivering the country from the galling yoke of Rome he imposed another even more wicked, and not less intolerable—for while repelling the presumptuous pretensions of the Papacy to rivet the chains of a temporal and spiritual despotism on the whole Christian world, he centred exclusively in himself the very authority he rebelled against, and became virtually the Pope of the English Church, in which capacity he assumed its complete government as "Christ's Vicar," decreed such changes as his caprice suggested, and

manufactured articles of belief which all his subjects were bound to receive under penalty of confiscation of property and forfeiture of life.

When this tyrant passed away, we have seen how under Edward VI. the same prerogatives were preserved to the Crown, and the same policy of supremacy over the Church was fully acted on, though the end aimed at was somewhat different. Reformation was pursued to screen past robberies, to render secure the unlawful appropriation of Church plunder, and afford a pretext for the pillage of any property that remained. The wicked assumption of the father became an axiom of State policy under the son—that the religious belief of a nation was a matter that legitimately lay within the jurisdiction of the sovereign power, and that the religion professed by the head of the State should be believed in, or be accepted for conformity's sake, by the nation at large. This was the logical conclusion, warranted by the assumption of Papal infallibility, in the exercise of which the son revoked all the articles of belief that had been imposed on the conscience of the nation by his father, and substituted in place thereof novelties of his Council's fabrication, while imprisonment, the imposition of ruinous fines, confiscation of property, the scaffold and the stake, became the fate of whoever dared express opinions that did not tally with the State Creed, or who presumed to worship God otherwise than in conformity with the prescribed formula.

But in a few years, when Mary appeared on the stage, we have seen what convulsion followed. She profited by the example of her father and brother so far as to make the high prerogatives they had usurped for the Crown available for her purposes, as they had done for theirs. The changes which they had introduced she deemed "poisonous innovations," and exactly the very same iniquitous and bloody means which they had taken to force their changes on the nation, she employed

in uprooting and destroying them, in order to restore the former ecclesiastical system !

And yet another revolutionary change !—Elizabeth ascends the throne, and the Papal authority once more falls. The whole system so zealously and defiantly restored under Mary is swept away, and the Church of the Reformation in England is re-established in tyranny, injustice, corruption, and blood. Elizabeth restored to the crown the prerogatives of infallible Popery, which Mary had relinquished as a sacrilegious usurpation abhorrent to her soul. Elizabeth became, therefore, to all intents and purposes, the pope of the English Church—its “Goddess,” as her clerical sycophants affirmed, and she dictated to the conscience and intellect of the nation with an assumption of infallibility as absolute, and an insolence as despotic and insufferable, as the most ambitious, imperious, and intolerant among the Popes. Hence the boast of the High Church party, whose tendencies are so manifestly Romeward, that under Elizabeth the identity of the “English Catholic Church” was strictly preserved. Hence, also, the integrity of “Apostolic Succession” claimed for and by its episcopate, and the pretensions, at once ridiculous and offensive, to which such an assumption has given rise.

Stephens, a high authority, in his edition of De Lolme, says :—“The identity of the English Catholic Church was not destroyed under the Tudors.

“The only difference in the Church, as it existed previous to the dynasty of the Tudors, and as it stood at the termination of the reign of Elizabeth was, that certain ecclesiastical abuses had arisen, which were corrected by Parliament and the clerical synods in convocation under Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth ; but the identity of the Church was never destroyed.

“The best illustration of the mode in which the Reformation was effected is Statute 5 and 6 William IV. c. 76. It

having been proved that positive abuses existed in municipal corporations, Parliament, in 1835, made enactments to correct such abuses, but in all other respects the rights of such corporations were left unimpaired, and no corporation lost its original identity.

“So with the English Catholic Church. It having been proved that positive abuses existed in the Church, its clerical synods in convocation, its lay synods in Parliament, or the Crown by power placed in its hands by the joint authority of those synods, made, under the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth, certain enactments to correct such abuses, but in all other respects (what other respects?) the rights of the Church were left unimpaired, and its original identity was never lost.”—*Stephens's Edition of De Lolme*, vol. i. p. 309.

We may observe that the analogy instituted between the corporations and the Church does not hold, because *the charters, the original constitutions of the corporations, were destroyed*—were declared out of joint with the age, and *new, more liberal and enlightened constitutions given to them by Parliament*. This is exactly what the Puritans wanted to do with the Church, but it was what Elizabeth resisted to the death.

➤ Thus no effectual reformation of the Church was accomplished under the Tudors; on the contrary, Henry and Edward initiated an ecclesiastical policy which, developed and matured in wickedness by Elizabeth, exercised a paramount influence over the political destiny of Great Britain—giving to history some of its saddest scenes and bloodiest pages.

Under the Tudors, the Crown plundered and enslaved the Church, using it as an institution in dependent connection with the State, for purposes of pillage, of corruption, and of faction, until the vices and abominations of the whole eccle-

siastical system, wielded by the despotic prerogatives of the Crown, attained such magnitude and became so intolerable under the second Stuart, that he perished on the scaffold, and not only was the Church as established completely overthrown, but the monarchy itself was buried in the ruins.

But even such calamities were not sufficient to teach the Church moderation and charity, while upon the doomed race of the Stuarts the pregnant admonitions of experience were entirely thrown away. And so after the Restoration, when the connection between Church and State was re-established, a policy of persecution and of blood once more gained ascendancy, until a combination of circumstances, somewhat analogous to those that preceded the Commonwealth, drove the infatuated James from the throne, and consummated the glorious Revolution of 1688.

This great event was brought about in direct opposition to cherished Church principles, and when it was "an accomplished fact," the whole influence of the clerical body and party was directed to pervert its objects, and neutralize the good it was designed to produce. Who can reflect unmoved on the utter frustration of the national hopes which the Revolution had so fondly excited?—hopes that were fully warranted by all the circumstances of the times, for Englishmen generally, of every religion and party, looked to its success for securing their deliverance from the despotism of a miserable bigot, and inaugurating a *régime* of constitutional liberty.

A more favourable opportunity, indeed, had never before offered for composing religious differences, for soothing the antipathies and animosities of sectarian strife, for securing the rights of conscience, and placing the civil liberties of the nation on a just and equitable foundation. As a body the English Catholics were well disposed to acquiesce in the Revolution had they been fairly treated as English subjects.

They proved this, not only by the indifference with which they regarded the fate of the cowardly and bigoted tyrant, James, but also by the assistance rendered by many Catholics openly to the cause of William. To have had secured to them the common law rights of Englishmen, and been treated with ordinary justice, was only necessary to have rendered the Roman Catholics of England as loyally devoted to the throne of the Revolution as any other class of the population. But the unholy connection between the Church and State interposed, and it was the hard doom of English Catholics, that for nearly a century and a half they had to remain in an ignoble condition of *helotism*—being legally excluded from the rights, privileges, and liberties appertaining to free subjects and citizens.

The Protestant Dissenters of all classes had to endure similar treatment—to bear the cruel burden of a yoke equally heavy and humiliating. There was, however, a peculiar hardship in their case, for the success of the Revolution had been principally achieved by their zealous co-operation and patriotic self-sacrifice. In the hour of danger and despair the persecuting Church sought their aid, begged for mercy, prayed forgiveness for the past, and made abundant promises with respect to the future. Manifold and great, indeed, would have been the blessings to the nation had the Church only been true to its professions—had the establishment of an enlightened policy of conciliation and justice been permitted, such as William and his wisest ministers were anxious to adopt and carry out impartially !

But the Church, in the throes of a fearful crisis, uttering piteous supplications for succour, was very different indeed from the Church delivered from danger, strong in its position, and wanton in the manifestation of its rancorous hostility to Dissent. To such a Church a policy of conciliation, justice, and peace was utterly alien ; and hence all the wise and politic

designs contemplated by William, with a view to heal religious dissensions and secure the rights of all, were basely thwarted by intolerant bigots, who aimed at imposing the shackles of Church authority on the free conscience of the nation, and in which they were aided by a powerful political party, who cared little or nothing about the Church as a religious institution, but sought always to make its influence subservient to their own factious purposes.

Thus it was that to the disastrous influence of the Church the fatal perversion of the Revolution was mainly attributable—a perversion which not only precluded the establishment of the civil and religious liberties of the nation on an equitable constitutional basis alike common to all loyal subjects, but did actually result in giving a dangerous ascendancy in the State to an intolerant monopolising faction of High Church Tories, who held in detestation every just principle of Government.

The practical result was that a Penal Code, even more infamous than the barbarism of Elizabeth had enacted, was framed, which not only virtually denationalized both the Protestant and the Catholic who dissented from State Churchism, but exposed them to the persecutions of malignant adversaries, as well as to the numberless vexations that resulted from a branded political and social inferiority. Both Protestant and Catholic had to remain, for nearly a century and a half, in this humiliating position outside the portals of the Constitution, as aliens in their native land, until at last the Protestant was enabled to achieve his emancipation in 1827, and the Roman Catholic in 1829—the Church to the last moment being the great, indeed the sole, obstacle to the triumph of justice.

And such has been the character consistently maintained by the Church since its first establishment—its invariable action has been as an obstruction to justice, an obstacle to progress, a conservator of abuses, and a rancorous promoter of persecu-

tion. Under the corrupt and demoralising ascendancy which it symbolised, every liberal, enlightened, pacificatory measure calculated to heal divisions, to harmonize discords, and advance the true well-being of the nation, encountered envenomed opposition, and too often suffered contemptuous defeat. Every proposal that was made to improve the political, the social, the moral, and even the industrial interests of the nation on an independent national basis, apart from the narrow sectarian platform of the Church, met the fate of a disdainful rejection. "The Church is in danger" was made the shibboleth to rally the forces of faction, and ensure the defeat of all proposed concessions to justice; and so the Church has continued in antagonism, as fiercely irreconcilable as that of the Papacy, to Liberalism, Progress, and Modern Civilization.

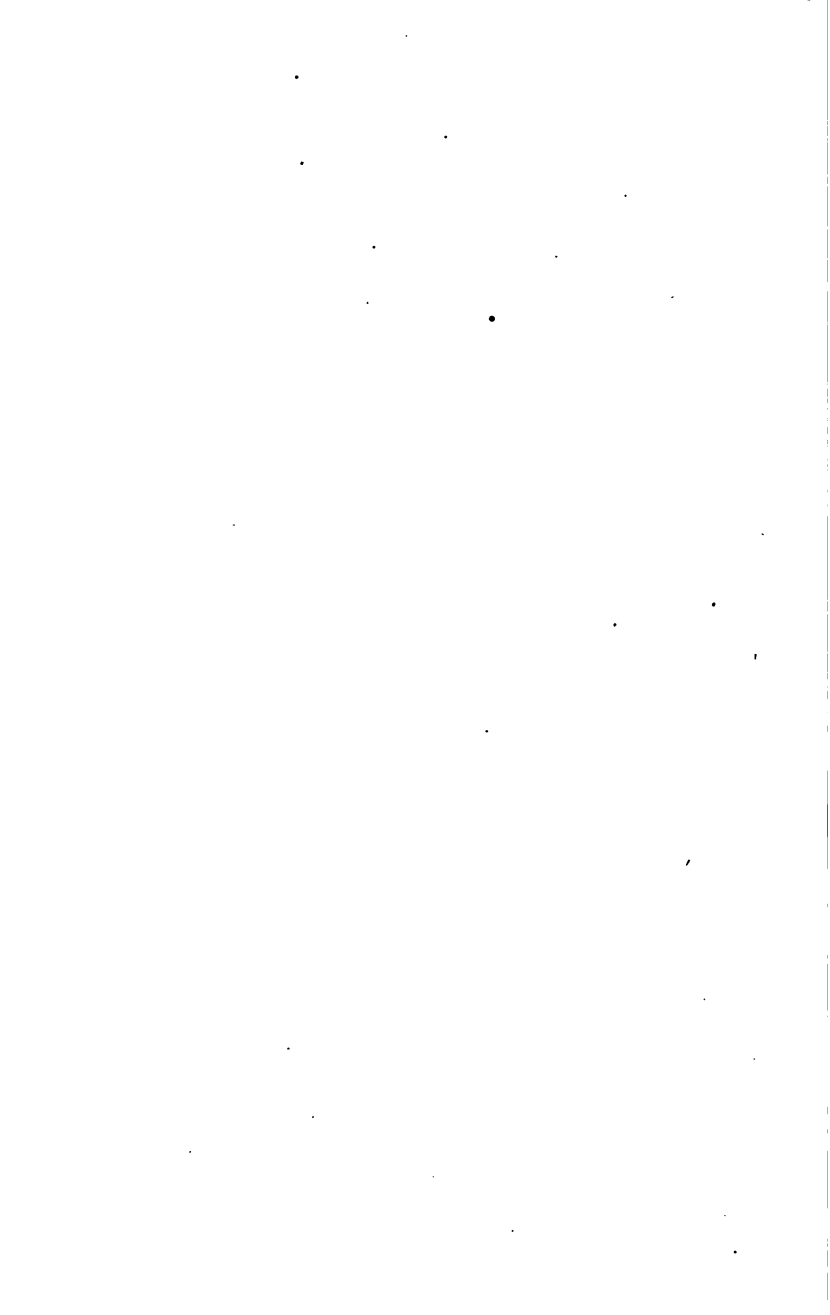
But what renders the condemnation of the Church even more emphatic, is the fact that while it has been persistently hostile to the civil and religious liberties of the nation, it never honestly sought to fulfil—and, as a matter of fact, never did fulfil—its own ostensible mission as "the National Church of England." It would be simply ridiculous to affirm that the Church is now, or ever was "national" within the legitimate comprehensive sense of the term. Suppose, for a moment, that all the Protestant Dissenting clergymen in England and Wales were silenced to-morrow, and their churches closed, what would the effect be on the population? Could the richest church in the world, with all its exclusive privileges and advantages, satisfy the "aching void" that would be created by such a measure?

Notoriously not! The Church cannot, therefore, be reasonably considered as "The National Church of England," in any honest practical sense, and consequently its existence is a palpable injustice to other Churches, against which the spirit of the age revolts.

Not only so, but the Church has become more than ever a scandal and reproach to Protestantism. That uniformity of faith and worship which it shed so much blood in attempting to enforce on those who repudiated its communion and rejected its authority, it cannot now enforce even among its own members, who are ranged in hostile camps, and hopelessly at issue on the most material points—both doctrinal and ceremonial. Thus, the Church exists as a house divided against itself, whose doom circumstances may possibly procrastinate for a while, but which nothing can avert.

Besides, as an able writer observes—"Social ecclesiastical caste is perpetuating to this hour much of the evil that was done by the Act of Uniformity, and by the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts. English society has been thus rent asunder for two hundred years. Is it not now time to seek to close the gap, to fill up the gulf?"¹ Most assuredly it is, and hence *the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church can only be regarded as a concession to national justice, which is becoming with time more susceptible of realization, and which undoubtedly must soon be yielded to the imperative expediencies of political necessity.*

¹ Stoughton's Church and State, &c., p. 434.



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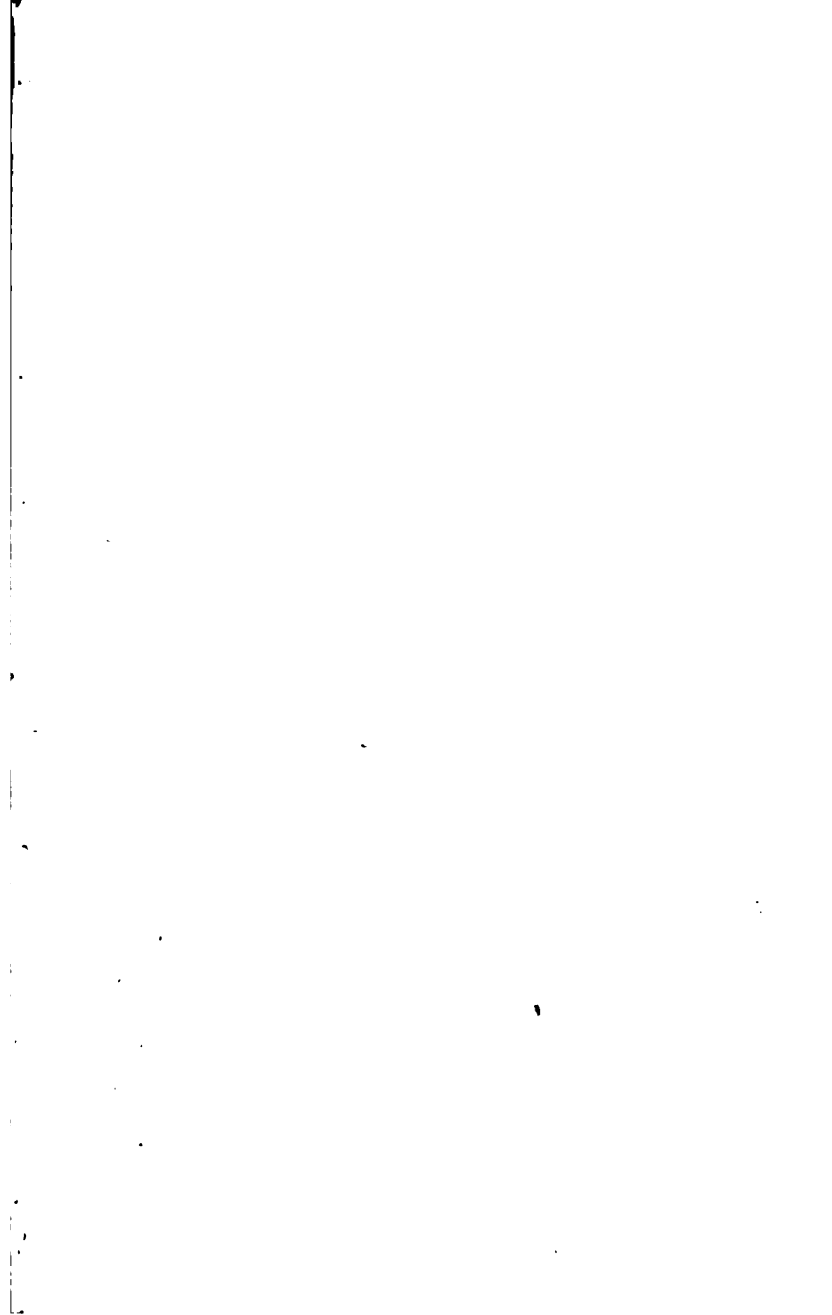
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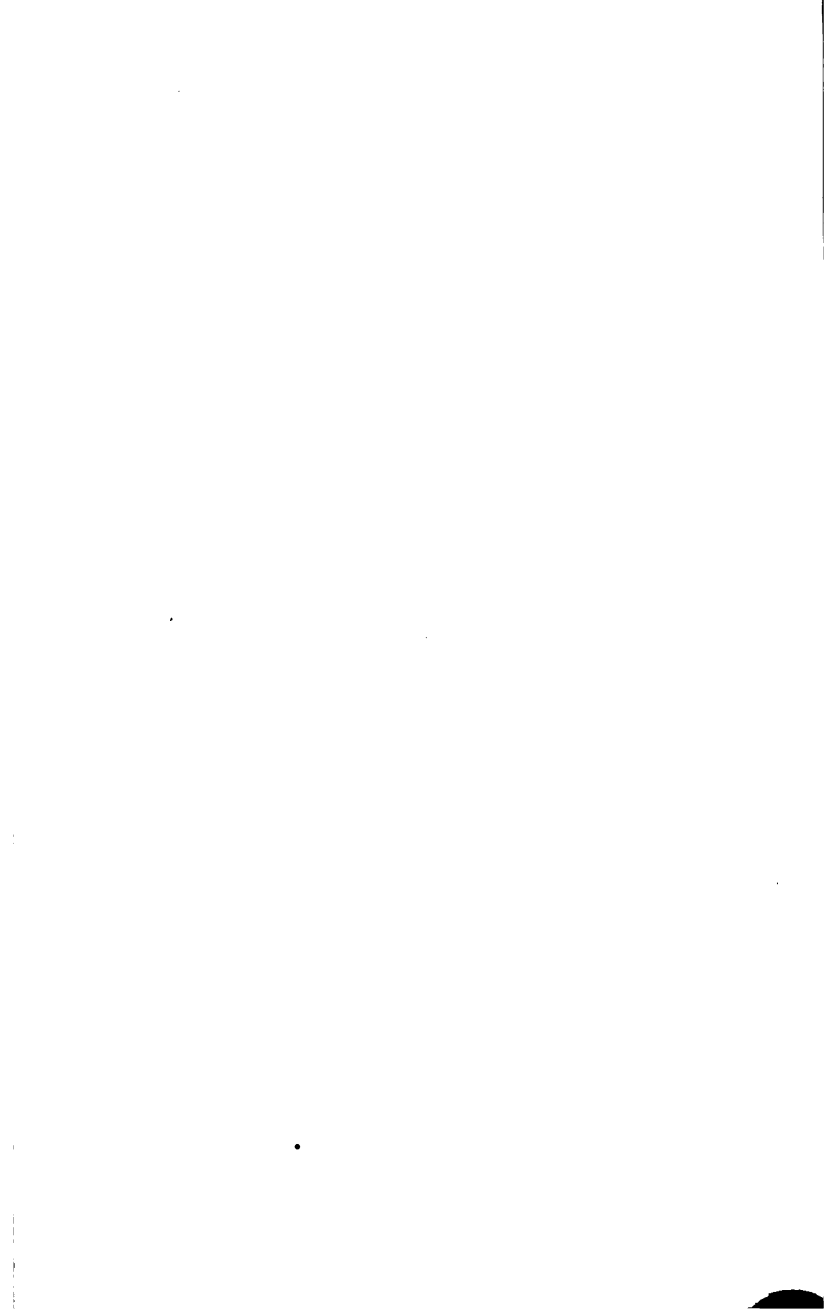
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Cambridge Press and University Herald.—"This book, answering in every way to its title, contains an exhaustive history of various kinds of baths, and gives a large amount of space to hydropathy, and also to the hot-air or Roman Bath. The action of hot water and hot air upon the human system is fully described, and a large number of testimonies are piled up as to the remedial efficacy of these baths. It was, perhaps, inevitable in a book like this, which has for its object to substitute the bath for the remedies which are now in vogue, that there should be a good deal of adverse criticism on the methods and the medicines used by the medical profession; but this is not the happiest part of the book. The great value and interest of the book, to our thinking, lies in the vast mass of information gathered from various sources, on the subject of which it treats. We must say that our perusal of the book has strengthened our faith in the value of the hot-air bath, and has been the means of bringing to our notice many valuable hints on cognate subjects."

Gloucester Journal.—"This is a forcibly written volume in support of hydropathy—treating of 'air and water in health and disease.' A short history is given of hydro-therapeutics and of baths, either warm, vapour, or hot air, from the earliest ages in which traces of their use can be discovered; after which the author proceeds to treat of the physiology of the human frame, and to demonstrate the beneficial action of the bath, or of hydropathic treatment, upon the body, whether in health or disease. The skin is shown to be no more than superficially cleansed by ordinary washing, even in heated water, and to require the production of profuse perspiration, as induced by a Turkish bath, for instance, for its thorough purification. The nature of disease itself is treated of, and the practice of hydropathy as a curative means is contrasted with that of physic, or drug medication; very much to the disadvantage of the latter. A considerable space is devoted to answering the various objections that have been raised against the use of the bath. While the bath is not claimed to be a panacea for all disease, its merits are explained in an exhaustive manner. The closing chapters relate to the beneficial effects of hydropathic treatment in relation to mental disease, consumption, public health, and to the bath as applicable to the lower animals."





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